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SANCTIONS against Italy are to be made effective by the League on November 18; the election in Great Britain is on the fourteenth. The gap of four days suggests a peace drive before Italy finally is subjected to economic penalties. The British government cannot risk the public discussion of peace during a political campaign. After the election its hands will be free. It will not wish or dare to abandon the League principle, but if peace can be had without outrage to the League, the British government may be willing to make it. Sanctions, even if administered in all good faith by League states, probably will not bring Italy to its knees for a year. Italy can buy essential raw materials as long as its gold and foreign exchange hold out. No government can be complacent in determining to prolong the conflict and tension in Europe for as long as a year, and the British, though leading the opposition to Italy, may want peace if it is at all possible. The French certainly want it at any price. A settlement which goes beyond the League offer, as drawn up by the committee of five, would be rejected by Geneva. One which offers less remains impossible for Mussolini. The only escape from the impasse would be

for Britain and France to compensate Italy independently of the League. That is, the League principle could be maintained in Ethiopia, but Mussolini might be given a large loan, part of it to save him from bankruptcy, part of it to finance colonization in the districts of Ethiopia where the League gives Italy the economic priority already promised. Only some such solution can end the hostilities in Africa and Europe. If it is not offered this month, we shall know that the British have determined to overthrow Mussolini.

THE RESUMPTION of military action in northern Ethiopia is not inconsistent with the possibility of peace negotiations later this month. Mussolini obviously delayed the advance hoping that Geneva would not be able to form a united front against him. In this he was disappointed. His gesture of removing two divisions from Libya also failed to bring the withdrawal of any British warships from the Mediterranean. Peace talks had already begun, but they were embarrassing to London, which complained bitterly to Paris for allowing news of them to leak into the French press. With two weeks to wait, Mussolini could continue his invasion in the Tigre province. So he put his army in motion again, an event played up by the newspapers far beyond its significance. Ethiopian resistance still is being withheld, and at little cost the Italians are able to advance a few more miles on the long trail to Addis Ababa. Having lengthened their lines of communication they will have to pause shortly while the tedious work of building motor roads and aeroplane fields behind the army is completed. The military problem in Ethiopia is obscured by the want of accurate information about the vaunted Ethiopian armies. The northern and northwestern armies are reported to have united, taking up a position to the southwest of the advancing Italians. Another army is reported to be marching to the north at a rate of ten or twelve miles a day. But the "war" correspondents with the Ethiopians can report little of value as they are kept from the front. A hundred thousand Ethiopians armed with modern rifles and plenty of machine-guns, if adequately provisioned and fairly well disciplined, could work havoc among the invaders. But nobody can say whether the Ethiopians can cope with a modernized army, and the element of surprise, so important in earlier wars over this terrain, has been eliminated by Italy's aeroplanes.

THE ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION of Wang Ching-wei, president of the Executive Yuan and Foreign Minister of the Nanking government, is a symbol of the growing opposition to Nanking's pro-Japanese policies. Wang, although the titular head of the Chinese government, was not personally responsible for these policies. A relatively weak figure, he had allowed Chiang Kai-shek to determine the country's foreign as well as domestic program, leaving him ostensibly responsible in the eyes of the public. Coming at a moment when the Japanese appeared to be launching a new offensive in North China, the attack is likely to have considerable effect in stiffening Chinese resistance to Japan's demands. While the present Nanking

regime has shown repeatedly that it has no scruples against selling out to Japan, there are limits to the extent to which it can run against public opinion. The prospect of a Japanese army being allowed to penetrate into the heart of China under the guise of fighting "communism" appears, moreover, to have been too much even for Chiang to stomach. In the face of this strengthened opposition Japan will do well not to press too vigorously the program which was recently agreed upon at Dairen. The separation of the five northern provinces might be accomplished without serious trouble, but undue pressure on either the Nanking or the Canton governments at the present time might precipitate a revolt which would throw China toward the Soviet Union. This would force Japan into an immediate decision regarding its long-projected attack on Soviet Siberia.

ON TOP of China's political troubles, largely the result of Japanese imperialism, has come a serious financial crisis growing out of the nationalistic monetary policy of the United States. After having suffered for more than a year from the effects of the Roosevelt silver-buying program, Nanking has finally decided to follow in the footsteps of Mexico and abandon the silver standard in favor of a managed currency closely linked to gold. Abandonment of silver in China, however, presents many more complications than were encountered in this country when the gold standard was suspended. Chinese peasants are congenitally suspicious of paper money, and for good reasons. With few exceptions all the paper currency circulating in China has sooner or later depreciated to the point of worthlessness. The best the government can hope to do is to confiscate the silver holdings of the banks and other large institutions. The peasants will keep whatever silver they have, and discount any paper money which is issued. Thus China will have a dual monetary standard, each currency fluctuating independently of the other. Perhaps the greatest danger in the situation lies in the temptation to the bankrupt Nanking regime to resort to the printing presses as a means of overcoming the deficits incurred in innumerable anti-Communist drives. Senator Pittman and his friends should be proud of their handiwork.

A NEW CRIME has just been invented by the opponents of organized labor. Ninety of the 250 employees of May's department store in Brooklyn have been on strike for about two weeks against long hours, low wages, and generally intolerable working conditions. The strike began after three girls were fired for joining an A. F. of L. affiliated union; two days after the three were discharged about ninety others had joined them spontaneously and were picketing the store. A number of arrests were made, the charges being disorderly conduct and the like, and the arrested strikers were found guilty and sentenced to five days in jail or a \$25 fine; sentence was suspended if they agreed to refrain from what the trial judge, Magistrate Malvin, considered further disorderly conduct. Mrs. Clarina Michelson, a union organizer, was arrested on the picket line under curious circumstances. A woman seized her by the arm on two occasions and shouted that she was being hurt, whereupon several policemen immediately appeared, and Mrs. Michelson was held on the disorderly-conduct charge and given twice as heavy a sentence as any of the strikers. On being freed after the payment of her fine, she was served with a bench warrant charg-

ing "conspiracy" and held in \$1,000 bail. No fuller description of the charge was obtainable from the office of the district attorney, but Section 580 of the New York penal law defines "conspiracy to interfere with business" as a crime. Incidentally, Section 582 of the same law expressly declares that a strike is not a conspiracy. It is inconceivable that the charge lodged against Mrs. Michelson and threatened for certain of the strikers will be sustained, but the union will be put to the expense of trying it, and meanwhile the strike will be seriously weakened. A good trick, in short, even if it doesn't work.

BEING AN OLD COP HIMSELF, Police Commissioner Valentine is probably acting true to form in issuing orders to stop, by whatever means, gang warfare in New York City. "There'll be promotions waiting for the men who muss them [the gangsters] up," he said. "I'll promote the men who kick these gorillas around and bring them in." One need not be on the side of the "gorillas" to see in these remarks an incitation to lawlessness and violence which no public official should be guilty of. This is as much lynch law as are the mob proceedings against Negroes in the South, and it is one of the fundamental precepts of our society that even a gangster is entitled to his day in court. It will be answered that the men who make millions out of New York's gang wars have been in and out—mostly out—of court ever since they passed the reform-school age, without any lessening of their violent assault upon society. The police records of men like Dutch Schultz are astonishing to simple citizens who still believe that prison sentences follow legally proved crime. The answer, however, lies in a reform of our police-court system, the protection of witnesses who might testify against criminals, the punishment of public officials who are frankly in league with gangsters and racketeers, and above all the elimination of news stories which glorify lawlessness. It most emphatically does not lie in more lawlessness on the part of the police.

IN ITS ISSUE of October 30 *The Nation* published an article on the Townsend pension movement by Richard L. Neuberger. The action of the Townsend national convention at Chicago appears to have borne out the charges made in that article. The 6,000 delegates unanimously adopted a resolution giving the Townsend national headquarters the sole and unqualified right to name the Congressional candidates who will receive the indorsement and support of the movement. Instead of permitting the rank and file of the old people in each community and state to select the recipients of their votes, Dr. Townsend and his immediate aides will have autocratic powers in this respect. R. E. Clements, "cofounder" of the Townsend plan, lashed out at plans for a new political party, and there was bitter criticism of President Roosevelt. This makes possible the inference that the votes of the pension ranks will be cast in the next election for the G. O. P. nominee, just as in California they were turned over to Governor Merriam. Continual pleas for more donations were advanced, and Dr. Clinton Wunder, New York organizer, urged the delegates to "dig down into your pockets so that the organization gets a tidy sum." In Oregon, while the national convention paid lip-service to democracy, Roy R. Hewitt was barred from Townsend platforms for criticizing the transaction tax.

WE NOTE that propaganda in the Soviet press for larger families and fewer abortions has ceased as suddenly as it began without resulting in any legal measures. We understand that the press desisted from the campaign chiefly because of the loud outcry from many Soviet citizens against such agitation. The letters which began pouring into the editorial offices of newspapers and other expressions of hostile public opinion led the authorities to decide that the move they had contemplated was too unpopular to be attempted. The feeling of the average inhabitant of the U. S. S. R. apparently was that improved living conditions and greater security were increasing the size of families without added pressure from above, and that legal restrictions might diminish the ability of women to live completely as they wish. The only new regulation, limited to the R. S. F. S. R. for the present, is one which requires both husband and wife to put in an appearance when a divorce is applied for by one of them. Under no circumstances can a divorce be denied, but the presence of the two parties invests the alimony obligation with greater seriousness and insures better provisions for the welfare of children. In case, however, one party is absent for several months, and cannot be located, the divorce will be granted without delay.

SOME WEEKS AGO the Anti-Fascist Association of the teaching staff of the City College in New York planned a mass-meeting to protest against the Italian invasion of Ethiopia and invited, among others, Oswald Garrison Villard and Morris R. Cohen to address the gathering. Just a few days before the announced date the association informed the speakers that the meeting had been indefinitely postponed because the curator of the college had refused the use of the Great Hall. The curator offered the flimsy excuse that the association was an "outside organization" despite the fact that every member is also a member of the college staff. The association protested the case to President Robinson, who, true to form, declined to intervene. An appeal to the Board of Higher Education was turned down without explanation, the board announcing that it would presently promulgate rules to govern the use of the Great Hall and other meeting rooms in the college. The College of the City of New York is a great public institution supported by public funds. If the subject of Italian aggression may not be discussed at a college meeting called by a faculty group, the situation calls for protest not only on the campus but from the public as well.

NEW ROCHELLE, one of New York's wealthy commuting centers, has been enjoying its own red scare in the past few days as a result of a combination of unusual circumstances. With a view to eliminating minor candidates in the municipal elections, the New Rochelle city charter provides that only the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes in the primary shall have their names placed on the ballot. In case of the death or withdrawal of either of these nominees, it specifies that the person receiving the third-highest number of votes shall be given his place. That this arrangement might work an injustice never seems to have occurred to the dominant Republican Party until the sudden death of its nominee, Mayor Crandell, who had led the field in the primary, gave the Communist candidate, Antonio Lombardo, the second position on the ballot. The Republicans immediately fell into a frenzy. Baffled in an

attempt to have the election postponed, they appealed to the courts to invalidate the poll on the ground that they were "disfranchised" by not being permitted to write in their votes. Meanwhile, the Democratic nominee became alarmed by reports that outside Communists were plotting his assassination and asked for a bodyguard until after the vote. This was resented by the Communist candidate, who filed a \$250,000 libel suit, charging misrepresentation of the Communist position. The threat of a red coup d'état was finally averted, however, when the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, after having previously denied a similar petition of the Socialist candidate, ordered that write-in ballots should be counted. The Westchester County gods may be with the Communists, but the courts seem to have a somewhat clearer sense of class-consciousness.

IT IS PLEASANT to record that the deportation proceedings against Mrs. Stella Petrosky of Wilkes-Barre have been dropped by the Immigration Bureau of the Department of Labor. Mrs. Petrosky, the mother of eight American-born children, came to this country from Poland in 1914, when she was fifteen years old. The wife of a miner, she lived close enough to the picket line to see all the paraphernalia of strikes and strike-breaking, and she experienced in her own family the privations of low wages, no work at all, and living on inadequate relief. She was successful in organizing groups of other miners' wives to force the relief stations to increase the weekly stipends for food and maintenance. Her children were active in a students' protest strike last March. These seem to have been her only crimes, but for them she was arrested and held for deportation on charges of being a member of the Communist Party and seeking to overthrow the United States government by force and violence. As a result of the activities of the American Committee for the Protection of Foreign Born and other agencies, an effective protest against her deportation was organized, and since there was no evidence of subversive activities on her part, it was not only humane but sensible that the charges against her were dropped.

SPRING FEVER at Connecticut State College last April took the form of a ruling by the board of trustees that any member of the faculty or student body who engaged in "any formal public agitation or formal public discussion" in opposition to military instruction or training in the college would be subject to dismissal. The ensuing protest was sharp and widespread, and the sober second thought of the trustees has just resulted in a welcome repeal of the ruling. In San Francisco, on the other hand, just before election the Board of Education hastily passed an order making it "insubordination" for any teacher to take an active part in the municipal elections. This ruling seems to have been occasioned by the fact that a United Labor ticket, comprising a united front of Epic Democrats, Utopians, labor unions, and other left-wing and liberal groups, was put in the field in opposition to the Republican machine. It was discovered that a few teachers were supporting the opposition, and the Board of Education, machine dominated, rushed into action to subdue these rash spirits. The action of the Connecticut College trustees may be recommended to education officials in general. The latter need to be reminded every so often that teachers also are people.

The Revival of British Jingoism

THE British government's decision to participate in the existing world race in armaments is explained and tacitly defended in an article by Mr. Negley Farson printed elsewhere in this issue. We publish this article not out of sympathy with its point of view, but because it obviously presents an accurate picture of the attitude of the present government. According to Mr. Farson, the Foreign Office looks upon British rearmament as the one hope of preserving peace in Europe. There is a certain plausibility in this contention. With Germany and Italy armed to the teeth, a general war appears inevitable unless the League of Nations can be forged into a powerful instrument of collective security. This can only be brought about if two conditions are fulfilled: (1) an effective system of sanctions must be developed; and (2) machinery must be created to correct some of the more glaring injustices perpetrated by the Treaty of Versailles. Mr. Baldwin insists that sanctions are meaningless unless backed by strong military force, and there is little chance that France will permit a revision of the peace treaties except under pressure from a powerful Britain.

The urgent necessity for a collective system is thus twisted to support the traditional plea for militarism. Nor does the new jingoism differ materially from the old. For the better part of a century England has been accustomed, through judicious use of the balance of power, to exercise a decisive role in European affairs. In recent years, as Mr. Farson points out, its prestige and influence have somewhat diminished. Whether this has been due to lack of armament or to a general weakening of England's economic position is a controversial issue, but whatever the cause, the situation has been intolerable to old-school Tories, steeped in the traditions of the golden age of British imperialism. For years such men have fumed and fretted at their government's weak-kneed defense policy, but their protests were little heeded until the Italo-Ethiopian crisis offered them new arguments by which to appeal to the millions of peace-loving Britons who have pledged their faith in the League.

The most persuasive and the most dangerous of these arguments is the assertion that sanctions can only be successful if backed by military power. It is true that sanctions of any type, economic or moral, imply the use of force, and there is always a danger that the outlawed nation may declare war on one or more of the states applying sanctions. But this only becomes a serious threat when the fundamental principle of collective action has been violated. Italy's resentment against Great Britain, for example, is not the result of Britain's cooperation with the League in imposing sanctions. It is caused chiefly by the fact that Britain on its own responsibility dispatched its fleet to the Mediterranean. As long as punitive measures against an aggressor represent the collective judgment of all nations, no one is likely to be singled out for attack. One of the primary merits of collective action lies in the fact that it makes unnecessary the burden of an enormous armament for any one nation.

But granting the essential selfishness of Britain's policy, there still remains the question whether this policy is not the best guaranty of peace in Europe. For no one can doubt

that the British government desires above all else to avert another world conflict. Having no immediate interest in the European status quo, it is willing to go much farther than France in the direction of a readjustment of boundaries and an elimination of the injustices of the peace treaties. In so far as British policy would strengthen the League and remove that body from French domination, its influence is definitely constructive. The entire world can join Britain in its present stand against Italian aggression, even though its motives are not wholly above reproach. But we must recognize that national rearmament such as Baldwin proposes weakens rather than strengthens the collective force of the League. A race in armaments is by nature divisive rather than cohesive. If allowed to get out of hand, it can only result in the scrapping of all attempts at collective action and a return to the pre-war system of alliances. Already we have seen a tendency in that direction in the Franco-Russian and Franco-Italian agreements, although thus far these understandings have been subordinated to the higher law of the League. If the League is to be transformed into a glorified Anglo-French alliance, as Mr. Farson envisions, it may exercise a temporary stabilizing influence in Europe, but sooner or later it is bound to suffer the fate of the Triple Entente.

The failure of the British government to grasp the moral possibilities of collective action is probably the chief cause of the failure of the League in the 1931 Manchurian crisis, to which Mr. Farson refers. Here we had a case of aggression fully as flagrant as Italy's unprovoked invasion of Ethiopia. The League, actively supported by the United States, unanimously condemned Japan for its action. But since the aggression did not constitute an immediate threat to the British Empire and since England was loath to go to war, it sabotaged every effort on the part of minor powers to adopt sanctions against Japan. To the military mind there can be no coercion save that of armed force. The fact that Japan, like Italy, was unusually vulnerable to economic sanctions was ignored under the convenient pretext that "sanctions mean war." It is conceivable, of course, that economic pressure would not have brought Japan to terms. No one knows yet whether economic force will suffice to curb Mussolini. But the failure to uphold the principles of the League Covenant in 1931 is unquestionably one of the main causes of Italy's shameless attack on Ethiopia in 1935.

Political realism does not consist, as some statesmen fondly imagine, in glorifying brute force as the only element in world politics. As long as armaments exist they cannot be ignored as a potent factor in the relationship between states, but they are not the only means of bringing pressure, nor are they inevitable. The tragedy of British policy is that at a moment when the world appears to be fashioning a more satisfactory weapon for dealing with recalcitrant nations, British jingoism is creating a situation which may easily cause all the gains of the past seventeen years to be lost. Britain would be a vastly stronger power for peace if it threw its influence unqualifiedly behind the principles of collective security and carefully avoided even the appearance of independent action.

Sanctions Under Neutrality

THE further warnings delivered to Americans against trading with belligerents, first by Secretary Hull, then by the President, show that the Administration is not holding to the narrowest view of its international duty in the crisis. By making the announcement on the eve of the reassembly of the League, it gave assurance of American sympathy with the policy of applying sanctions against Italy. The Administration remains technically within a policy of neutrality, since it can warn against trade with Ethiopia as well as Italy. Whether it is prepared to go farther to prevent trade with Italy is not clear. The President told the White House correspondents that a manufacturer had asked him at luncheon whether he should fill an order from the Italian government for shoes suitable for army use. Mr. Roosevelt advised him not to. Not every manufacturer will be able to discuss his orders with the President over a lunch table. Probably there is more behind the warnings from Washington than mere words. All trade with Italy is not forbidden, since, as Washington sees it, there is no law by which this can be done. But the weapon of publicity remains. The President said that the government was keeping informed on all shipments consigned to either belligerent, and had an eye on exports intended for transshipment to them. With public opinion aroused against American business men prolonging the war, or deriving profit from it, the President may be preparing to publish a "rogues' list," and to use public opinion as a final court of law, since he is not sure he can enter any other court.

The Nation has advocated the abandonment of neutrality, and direct action by the United States against Italy as a violator of the Kellogg pact. The use of a neutrality resolution to accomplish indirectly the same end destroys much of the moral effect of our solidarity with other nations now taking steps to outlaw war. But the neutrality resolution is there, and until Congress changes it the Administration must make of it what use it can. The marked rise last month in exports to Italy of cotton and oil has attracted the attention of Washington, but unless these can be defined as "implements of war" under the neutrality resolution, public opinion and suasion alone can curb such sales.

When that resolution was being debated in the Senate (August 21, 1935), Senator Fletcher asked Senator Pittman whether wheat, corn, cotton, meat, and other food products would come under its terms. Senator Pittman replied: "In my opinion they do not, nor do I believe they do in the opinion of the committee, for the reason that today the definition of 'arms, ammunition, and implements of war' is very generally recognized in international law." He explained that the Senate had recently ratified a definition of the terms. This was the Geneva Arms Traffic Convention, which is worth examining for a moment. It establishes five categories. The first consists of "arms, ammunition, and implements of war exclusively designed and intended for land, sea, or aerial warfare." The second consists of "arms and ammunition" (but not of implements) "capable of use both for military and other purposes." The third is vessels of war

and their armament, the fourth is aircraft and aircraft engines, the fifth is gunpowder and explosives except common black powder. None of these categories could be stretched to include raw materials essential to war.

There may be a precedent for a broader definition in the Jay treaty with Great Britain of 1794. It contains a full listing of contraband in Article 18, which specifies certain materials, arms, ammunition, and implements of war, and adds "... and other implements of war as also timber for shipbuilding, tar or rosin, copper in sheets, hemp and cordage. . . ." It is not absolutely clear that the words "as also" imply that timber and the other raw materials mentioned are implements of war, and not merely additions to the list of contraband, but the paragraph certainly can be so read. If the Administration wished, it could appeal to the Jay treaty, though not without immediate offense to the intentions of the Senate, which had the narrow definition of the Arms Traffic Convention clearly in mind.

But this is more than a question of dealing with Italy. It also establishes a precedent. Persons who advocate using the neutrality resolution as a handy instrument for penalizing Italy must take farther implications into account. They ask the suspension of trade in essential raw materials with all belligerents, which because it affects only Italy becomes a sanction against that country. But if Italy should attack the League, the United States in logic would have to suspend trade in essential raw materials with all League states, and our sanction then would be a punishment of the states which were penalizing a breach of the Kellogg pact. We should find ourselves in a hopeless position morally; we also should be in an almost impossible position economically, for we should be denying ourselves trade with Canada, Great Britain, and our other leading customers, for utterly false reasons. It is in taking this longer look ahead that the danger of the present policy becomes apparent. Convenient though it is for temporary purposes, it is an open invitation to very grave trouble. We must do our clear thinking now. We are not and do not wish to be neutral in our trade policy with Italy. That is the simple truth. And the quicker Congress can be brought to acknowledge it, the shorter will be the duration of the war.

What Do You Read?

TWO lists of "books worth knowing" have lately been issued by the National Council of Teachers of English. One list was made up by a group of the English faculties in fifty-five colleges; one by 1,638 students in fifty-three colleges. There are fifty books in each, and interestingly enough there are only twelve duplications, among them being those time-honored classics "Tom Jones," "Pride and Prejudice," "Jane Eyre," and "Vanity Fair." This makes a total of eighty-eight books which are presumably recommended to the general public as important if not necessary to a well-rounded literary acquaintance.

Such a list of "bests" always offers a temptation for analysis, and anyone who presumes to think about the merits of the choices always falls into the danger of issuing final literary judgments. But without claiming too much omniscience, one may believe certain things of the persons who make

the selections. On the faculty list, which includes—perhaps properly enough—Jane Austen, Boswell, Charlotte Brontë, Conrad, Dickens, Hawthorne, Kipling, Melville, Scott, and Mark Twain, there are only three books, "Eminent Victorians," "Arrowsmith," and "Babbitt," published during the last fifteen years. There is no Dreiser, no Proust, no Joyce, no Mann; no mention of "Of Human Bondage," which is certainly one of the most mentionable novels of the twentieth century. If this may be interpreted as nothing more than a proper academic aloofness from contemporaneity, consideration of the classics not included also shows remarkable omissions in the list. Chaucer does not appear, or Dante; Milton is as absent as Herrick (perhaps there is an academic conspiracy against the poets); not Cervantes, not even Shakespeare breaks into the faculty-favored few. There is no boycott of the dramatists, however, for Sheridan appears with "The School for Scandal" and "She Stoops to Conquer," but Sophocles and Euripides are as conspicuous by their absence as are Shaw and O'Neill. The only biographers are Boswell and Lytton Strachey; the only essayist is Lamb.

The students, displaying at least more catholic impartiality, manage to include "Anthony Adverse," as well as Maugham's best book; "The Good Earth" rubs elbows with Richard Halliburton's "The Royal Road to Romance"; "Mourning Becomes Electra" and "Strange Interlude" are not forgotten, but neither is Charles Morgan's "The Fountain." Although the professors omitted all mention of Tolstoi and Dostoevski, the students named "Anna Karenina." "War and Peace," which has often enough and with reason been declared the greatest novel ever written, does not appear. Not even the students get around to Shaw, and they are as neglectful of poetry as their elders.

It is not, of course, claimed that either of these lists represents the fifty best books of all time, and if it were, the claim would be silly enough, no matter what titles were chosen. There is no list of fifty bests. There is a body of literature which has persisted for varying lengths of time, some of it for thousands of years, and as it continues to persist we are justified in thinking it great. The Bible is still read after several millennia, not merely because it is the authoritative basis for European religion, but because it is great literature. As authors approach our own age, the reasons for thinking them excellent require more discriminating taste and judgment. We must be able to distinguish literary merit in them by standards which can be soberly justified before they have "lasted" long enough to establish them in time. But it is reasonable to expect that a list of important books will include a fair percentage of those the reading public as well as literary critics have thought important. The two lists which we have discussed indicate rather painfully that the professors are wrapped in a soft literary calm which admits some of the "classics" but almost none of the more difficult ones, and which tends to eschew modern writers, perhaps because the professors believe them not yet sufficiently established to be considered and conceivably because English faculties have not yet got around to reading them. As for the students, they seem to be making their own choices more currently. They know that new books are still being published, but they cannot distinguish the solid from the superficial, and they evidently should not look to their mentors for guidance in making their selection, either of the old or the new.

Anthracite Peace

A SOOTY dove of peace, two years on the wing, has alighted at last in the hard-coal fields of Pennsylvania. There will be no more bombings, no more bloody battles, no more terrorism, or none, at least, in the name of dual unionism. The United Mine Workers of America have always had difficulties in the central Pennsylvania region, partly because the union is primarily a soft-coal union, and partly because John L. Lewis's organization has not been too fortunate in its local leadership. This internecine strife led finally to a strong secession movement, resulting in the formation of an opposition union, the United Anthracite Miners of Pennsylvania. The new union, though it was more militant in that section than the U. M. W. A., inherited a great many of the old-line union's faults and, further, was at a considerable disadvantage in the matter of contracts. These were already in the hands of the United Mine Workers and the operators simply refused to recognize the insurgents. With a paper membership of 30,000, the United Anthracite Miners opened a bitter fight for recognition, and brought into play both violence and coercion. The civil authorities, the coal operators and their company police, and, not least, the members of the old union returned fire for fire, and for two years the coal area about Scranton, Wilkes-Barre, and Hazleton has been in turmoil, with strikes, bombings, riots, and litigation.

A combination of circumstances has now brought about what arbitration and conciliation failed to accomplish, and the rebel miners have applied to the United Mine Worker for reinstatement. Moreover, the mother union has agreed to consider these applications, an action which it considers a great concession, and there is every indication that it will act upon them favorably. The reason for this wholesale recantation, which has the approval of the insurgent leaders, is not far to seek. First of all there is the continuing depression. Even in the best of times the hard-coal miner's lot is not a particularly happy one, and under the present conditions, with practically no work even for the favored union, the rebels are left entirely out in the cold. Moreover, the time for the renewal of anthracite contracts is drawing near, and while at first the United Anthracite Miners had planned to ask for their share of these, the recent declaration of the Lewis union that its chief bargaining issue would be equalization of work has made the rebels realize that their chances are better within the union than outside. The second reason for the new peace is directly connected with the great gain in strength and militancy shown by the industrial-union forces at the recent American Federation of Labor convention. Lewis and his union are going places; the Pennsylvania rebels recognize this, and they are anxious to be for once on the winning side. Hence their readiness to transfer their loyalty to the U. M. W. A. On the other side, since the progressives, in their drive for control of the A. F. of L., need all the man power they can summon, the horny Lewis hand of friendship is extended to the repentant renegades. Both sides have expressed their gratification that the long feud is over. Needless to say, the people of the coal communities, who have been living under a minor reign of terror for two years, will be equally pleased.

Issues and Men

Neutrality and the House of Morgan

Those were the days when American citizens were urged to remain neutral in action, in word, and even in thought, but our firm had never for one moment been neutral; we didn't know how to be. From the very start we did everything we could to contribute to the cause of the Allies. Mr. J. P. Morgan himself never attempted to be neutral in feeling. He spoke his mind with shy frankness both in and out of season.

IN these words Thomas Lamont has described the attitude of himself and his partners toward the World War. They are quoted again in Nicolson's new life of Dwight Morrow, and Mr. Lamont has confirmed them in a recent letter to the *New York Times*. The firm is very proud of its attitude at that time. Very well; let us examine it. At the outbreak of the war the President of the United States called upon every American citizen, in the interest of keeping this country at peace and out of the European disaster, to be "neutral in thought and deed." Most patriotic citizens endeavored to live up to that Presidential counsel. Many besides the members of the Morgan firm did not. Like the Morgans they were on the side of England by tradition, inheritance, taste, and business and other associations. Mr. Morgan owned a great deal of property there, and his banking house in London was, and is, a most influential British institution. On the other side, most of the German-Americans were as divided in their loyalty then as they are today when they worship at the barbaric shrine of Hitler. As a result, the German-Americans were excoriated by press and public. The Anglo-Americans, being, most of them, rich, privileged, and powerful, or of the intellectual elite, were rarely rebuked by anyone, yet the disloyalty to the policies of our government was precisely the same in both cases.

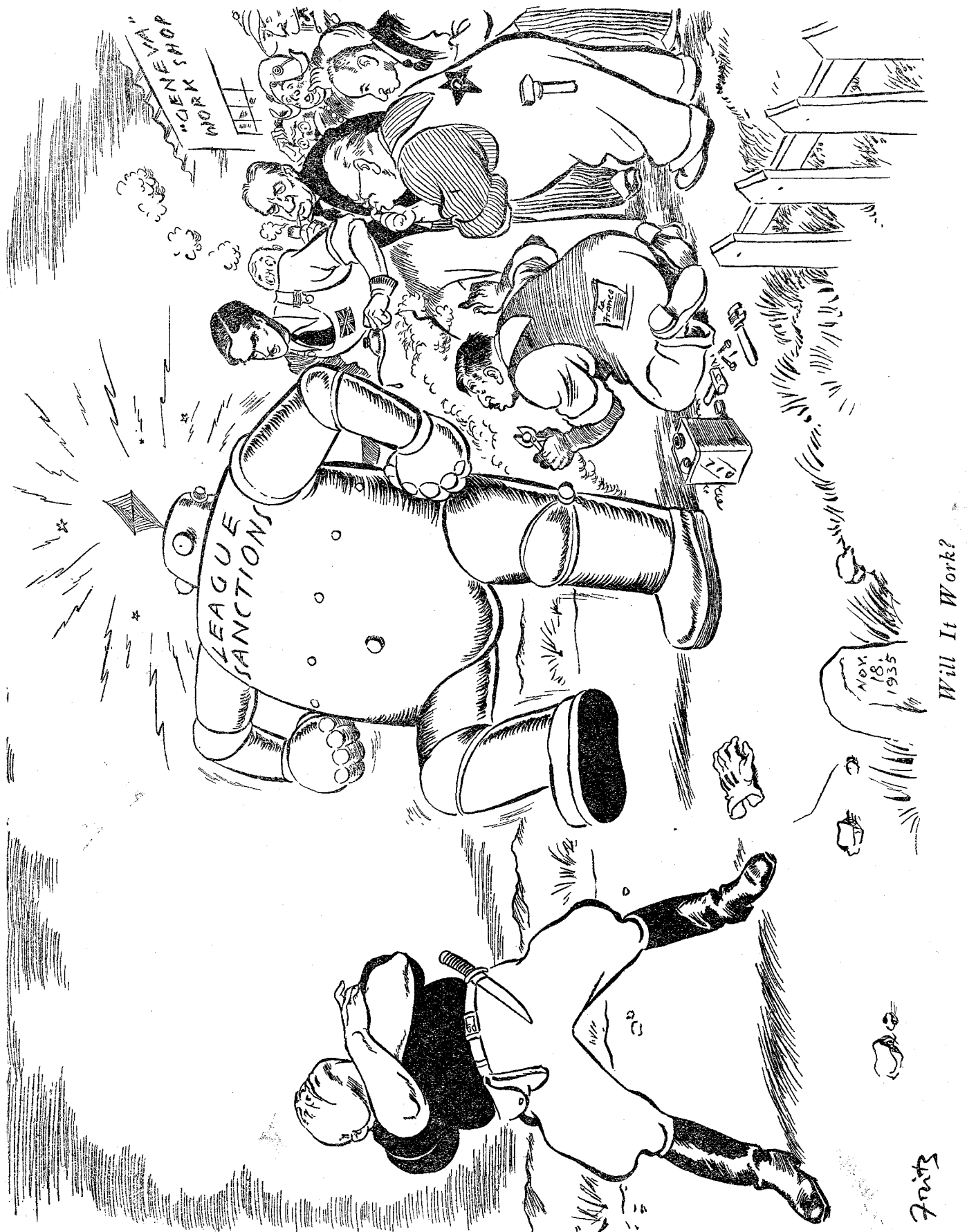
Now what Mr. Wilson meant was not that American citizens should not make up their minds about where they thought justice and right were, but that they should neither so plan nor so act as to involve the United States in any way in the European struggle. Mr. Wilson himself was naturally pro-Ally, yet for a long time he maintained the position which he asked the country to assume. One reason for his anger at Walter Page was that that gentleman entirely forgot that he was American Ambassador to Great Britain and went to Lord Grey and others for counsel on how he should stand toward his own government. The Morgans went ahead entangling themselves and the companies they were interested in more and more inextricably with the cause of the Allies. Not only did they make enormous sums by acting as agents for the British government, but many of the corporations in which they held stock also profited largely by the war contracts. As Mr. Lamont has said, they did not cause the Allies to place contracts here; it was the war that did that. They were merely fortunate in being selected to "run the pie counter, and when you are at the pie counter you cannot help eating pie," to borrow the apt phrase of one very closely allied to a member of the Morgan firm. Mr. Morgan's very connection with his London house made his

New York firm the logical agent in America for the British government. They leapt to it with a greater enthusiasm because, as Mr. Lamont says, they did not want to be neutral. They did not at first ask whether this would bring the United States into the war or not. Later on when things were going very badly with the Allies and it looked more than doubtful that the British bonds floated in this country would be worth the paper they were printed on, they were perfectly willing that millions of young Americans should be shipped abroad to the shambles which so nearly finished the world and accomplished nothing—not even the destruction of German militarism.

The excuse made by many pro-Ally Americans was that there was a higher law; that conscience and moral indignation overruled both patriotism and loyalty to the policy of their government. The world was on fire; they must take sides. It was Evil against Good; who could hesitate? It was the same argument that we heard so often in prohibition days; people declared they would not obey a law which revolted their consciences. In many cases, as I pointed out at the time, people, deliberately or unwittingly, confused their consciences with their appetites. The same is true of the purveyors of supplies to the British government. They thought they could differentiate between their consciences and their financial interests. The result was that we got into the war much more rapidly and surely than would have been the case if the bankers had been prohibited from doing business with either belligerent.

All of this brings up the question whether these men can or cannot be considered loyal and patriotic Americans who put their own country's interest above that of any other country or group of countries. Of course the first answer will be that they were serving humanity, and that humanity is superior to the welfare of any one nation. Unfortunately for this argument, time, the remorseless, has passed judgment. We know that humanity was not served, and if the members of the House of Morgan had had vision at the time they would have known that you cannot advance the welfare of the world by wholesale slaughter; that you cannot cure war by war, or do else than debase all mankind in the futile effort to shoot goodness and virtue and your point of view into those whom you consider erring human beings. The Morgans were rich and powerful, and what is known as society and big business sided with them. We got into the war and we "won it," so it is said. The common people of America don't think so, but they are an ignorant crowd. They are even determined today, as I pointed out last week, to prevent any other Wall Street advocates of the higher altruism from ever again making colossal fortunes out of the blood, misery, and suffering of multitudes.

Howells Garrison Villard



The Russian Revolution Comes of Age

By LOUIS FISCHER

Moscow, October 15

IN the U. S. S. R. eighteen is the age of maturity. On November 7, 1935, the Bolshevik Revolution comes of age. It is a time for looking backward and looking forward. In many respects the Soviet regime has accomplished more, in many respects less than its leaders and supporters expected eighteen years ago. When the Bolsheviks had been in power seventy-one days, Lenin was as happy as a child, for the Bolshevik state had broken the record of the Paris Commune. Every additional day in office was an achievement in that early period. Now the Soviets are as stable as any bourgeois government and firmer than many. Nothing at home can unseat them and no foreign alliance at present feasible would be strong enough to defeat them in war.

The Soviet government, however, was not established merely that it might exist. What has it proved and what has it achieved? For eighteen years two systems, one capitalist, the other anti-capitalist, have coexisted, now in violent hostility, now in partial, insincere, opportunistic, or honest cooperation. This is an exciting age, in which an old world vies with a new. They may end by clashing. Meanwhile, they are engaged through words and through deeds in endeavoring to prove which is superior. The presumption is that, given peace, the better system will win.

The Soviets have demonstrated that a regime which has suppressed domestic capitalists and has had only meager and costly aid from outside capitalists can make progress and give its citizens finer material conditions than they enjoyed in the past. Because this is a dangerous proposition it is vehemently denied, and data confirming it are suppressed or distorted. But the fact remains. The U. S. S. R., moreover, has been immune to the worst and longest crisis that ever afflicted capitalist countries irrespective of whether they were relatively advanced or as much in need of new construction as Russia. There is reason to believe that resistance to economic depressions is inherent in Soviet economics and that the Soviet Union's progress will be free from periods of boom and slump. Apart from the results directly attributable to planning and the operation of Marxist non-profit principles, Soviet economic success arises from the supplementary personal incentives supplied by a society where income, never unearned, is visibly proportionate to the value of effort, and where possibilities of advancement are unlimited.

Socialism exploits many of capitalism's methods of stimulating initiative and adds potent ones of its own. No evidence is available to support the contention that government ownership and operation, when they embrace all industries as they do in the U. S. S. R., are less efficient than other systems. Indeed, it is often argued that the waste of under-capacity production, so common throughout the world and so strange to a Soviet mind, far exceeds that flowing from inexperience and technical lag. Soviet distribution, miserably inadequate when scarcity and rationing encouraged every manner of malfeasance and corruption, has

now turned over a new leaf, on which are recorded several recent entries of better service and appreciable price reductions. These reflect sharp increases in the volume of consumers' goods. But the greatest economic revolution has taken place in Soviet agriculture. Collectivization is the first organizational change in farming since feudalism retreated before modern capitalism. The collective is to the mujik's holding as a big, up-to-date factory is to the ancient artisan's shop. This new form of farming contains tremendous potentialities of higher productivity, some of which are already in the process of realization. More output is a Soviet ideal, and with every consumer a permanent producer it is likely to remain so.

In the field of economics the revolution has made many mistakes and has chalked up a huge expense account in lives and human suffering. But no fundamental weakness and no illogic have as yet been discovered in Bolshevik methods of production and distribution. Plenty mocked by poverty would be inconceivable, and every able-bodied and able-minded person can find a job. The rest must be wards of the state. It has been argued with considerable cogency, of course, that real communism would give to each according to his needs rather than abilities. But the Russian system is not real communism. At the present stage of development, when capitalist psychology lingers in the mental make-up of every Soviet citizen, complete equality of compensation would destroy initiative and retard progress. The Bolsheviks merely try to prevent excessive variations of income. Discrimination in favor of the proletariat, the class with more bolshevism and less effectiveness as producers, formerly gave workers a relative advantage over intellectuals and professionals. But when the engineers and others were "raised to the level of workingmen" (1931) and peasants accorded the same civil rights as factory hands (1935), wider material differentiation appeared. Equality in the political status of classes fostered greater economic inequality. The tender beginnings of democracy and the birth of a Soviet nationhood, in place of a class-versus-class system, have been attended on the one hand by a relaxation of the government's endeavors to prevent sharper contrasts of material standards and on the other by a general rise in the well-being of all and a partial bridging of the gap between the poor "dark" countryside and the improved city. What Karl Marx called "the idiocy of village life" is disappearing. During 1935 money was granted free rein, and the consequent new commercialism has been allowed to penetrate even into the field of social medicine, which it should never have been permitted to touch. It is commercialism, however, without competition.

This is a transition period in Soviet development in which the defeated yet unburied past continues to struggle with the emerging future. It is a period between night and dawn. Hateful remnants of the old persist and contaminate the new. A whole nation is consciously and quickly making history, and nothing could be more fascinating, yet it is obviously not easy to fashion new modes of

life. Nor can I think of new Soviet forms in literature, the theater, the cinema, music, painting, or sculpture. The revolution is eighteen years old. Its first three years were spent in fighting off military attacks. Between 1921 and 1928 capitalism in the U. S. S. R. threatened to return to power, and socialist economy, non-existent in the vast countryside, was weak in the city. The first Five-Year Plan (1929-32) inaugurated a quinquennium of violent activity and progress but also of fearful repression and sacrifice, which lasted through 1933. The revolution has really had only about eighteen months of normality, and in these the desire to rest has conflicted with the irresistible urge to proceed. How, therefore, can one pass final judgment on the social and psychological force of the revolution?

The Bolsheviks are not afraid of bourgeois forms. They are strengthening the family. In September of this year army and navy titles (lieutenant, captain, major, colonel, but not general or admiral—that would have been too much), abolished by the revolution, were reintroduced with no adequate explanation. During October, November, and December, 1935, the Moscow local industries will be manufacturing 1,250,000 starched collars, and they will be sold and worn. In general, styles and tastes in clothes have undergone no alteration since the revolution. All Soviet schoolchildren will soon wear uniforms just as all Russian pupils did prior to 1917. A year ago, when stricter discipline was brought back into the educational system, the Czarist terms "director" and "class" (grade) were restored to use.

Foreign radicals, powerless or unwilling to oppose the essence of capitalism, often confine their protests to the superficial trappings of the bourgeoisie, like evening dress, luxurious automobiles, fine villas, rich foods. But there is nothing essentially bad in these things or in dancing, silk dresses, felt hats, and other "bourgeois" manifestations which the Bolsheviks objected to until recently. The memory of them was too fresh; these articles were connected with a past that was still alive. But of 170,000,000 Soviet inhabitants, 69,000,000 were born under the sickle and hammer, and if one includes children who were six years old on November 17, 1917, there are today 82,000,000 individuals in the U. S. S. R. who never knew capitalism. This new generation has more effective ways of being anti-bourgeois than rejection of what was simply because it was. The Bolsheviks apparently believe that the resurrection of certain former conveniences will no longer jar or irritate or recall another regime. Yet why should a Komsomol wear a stiff white collar and why should the commander of a regiment be "Comrade Colonel"? Are there no other roads to elegance and neatness, no other means of indicating importance of task? The Communists contend that backward countries need not pass through a capitalist stage in their development to socialism. But it would appear that a socialist country must pass through a bourgeois stage in personal habits and personal relationships. One of the reasons therefor is probably the pressure of the capitalist world which surrounds the U. S. S. R. Perhaps the Soviets must be as good as the bourgeoisie before they can be better. Is this why Soviet citizens who are deeply convinced of their system's superiority to capitalism nevertheless evince a humility and a sometimes unwarranted attitude of respect before foreigners and things foreign which have recently provoked the scorn of

Ilya Ehrenburg and other Russian authors? Or is it that the U. S. S. R.'s cultural level lags behind its economic and political achievements? An inner Soviet contradiction is at the bottom of it all: a country that has destroyed its bourgeoisie cannot get rid of its bourgeois feelings. The love of material possessions refuses to die, and the increase in the volume of goods has been accompanied, by considerable economic inequality and much petty thievery, which are cause and effect.

These are some of the problems which the Bolsheviks now face. It is much too early to say what will happen. But the revolution is still young and dynamic, events move rapidly, and change is perpetual. This is, in fact, a heroic phase of the revolution, more heroic than the first Five-Year Plan, and the Bolsheviks are attempting to express it in their architecture and literature, and in editorials which are replete with pathos. Enthusiasm, pride, and faith in success know no bounds. "There are no fortresses which the Bolsheviks cannot take" is not only Stalin's slogan; it has become a nation's creed.

The unlimited self-confidence and universal animation which all, including foreigners, feel in the U. S. S. R. is explained by the close identification of the people with the government's activities. The rise in railway-car loadings achieved under Lazar Kaganovich's guidance in the last half year, the mounting individual productivity of coal diggers in the Donetz basin, the gathering of the season's crop, and the publication of new school textbooks are national events; and the pertinent figures are scanned daily with an eagerness reminiscent only of a country watching the progress or retreat of its armies in war time. The shortcomings of certain state farms, for instance, are assumed to be everyone's concern; half of the first page of daily papers can be devoted to reforms in the peat industry of central Russia. All of Moscow built the city's new subway and all of Moscow is proud of it. This emotional democracy has a concrete effect on the economic value of each producer. Suddenly the lime-light may be concentrated on him as if he were a pilot making a record-breaking flight. Rank-and-file workers are praised or condemned in the national press, and pictures of distinguished factory hands get into the papers or are prominently displayed on bulletin boards. In this sense each employee feels that he is an agent of the people invested with a trust which he must not betray. The patriotism which other governments arouse for special occasions is a daily affair in the Soviet Union. It is a kind of permanent being on parade or being on the battlefield—though one merely sew buttons on underwear. As a result, the seamstress and the locomotive driver acquire a new dignity; they serve the state. Now the peasants in the collectives are being drawn into the same emotional field.

At the age of maturity the revolution is young. At eighteen life is just beginning. Yet the strain and privations of the revolution and of the war years that preceded it have made many individuals prematurely old. In the last year I have heard quite a number of Soviet citizens say: "I should like to live long. It would be good to see the completion of these wonderful construction projects and interesting social processes." There is, therefore, a vast yearning for good health and good living. The belief in a glorious future is so unquestioning that all people want to experience it. The only cloud is the possibility of war.

Controlling the Arms Makers

By H. C. ENGELBRECHT

WHEN every effort on the part of business has failed to stave off government regulation, there always remains the possibility of creating a favorable control board to nullify, or at least moderate, regulatory action. This practice has been developed by the utilities into such a fine art that most efforts at supervision have been reduced to shadow boxing. Is it possible that the present attempts to control the arms industry will be nullified in the same way?

The National Munitions Control Board recently constituted is made up of the Secretaries of State, the Treasury, Commerce, War, and the Navy, though the actual work is in the hands of Joseph C. Green of the State Department. All these departments except the Treasury have a record and a tradition in munitions control. They all hold attitudes which have been rather consistently maintained. For the present legislation is nothing more than a modification of practices which have been in operation for some years. Munitions makers have for some time insisted that they never do anything without "official approval." This is probably correct. The O. K. has generally been obtained from the War or Navy Department, sometimes from the State Department. Under this system "official approval" was granted for sales to Germany contrary to the Treaty of Versailles, for sales to Japan even during periods of tension, and for general expansion of the arms business even during disarmament campaigns.

It is well to remember this in estimating the kind of control we are likely to get. Various points of view are represented on the control board and it will be interesting to see which wins out. To begin with, the attitude of the Army and Navy departments is purely nationalist and militarist. They have no use for disarmament and their sole plan of national defense is a large army and an enormous navy. It is not surprising, therefore, that the feeling of these two departments toward the war industries amounts almost to affection. They want to keep all munitions factories busy so that they will be ready for any "emergency." Hence foreign business must be encouraged "to keep these industries in practice," and "educational orders" must be placed with various firms to build up experience in arms making.

"It is the desire of the War Department," wrote Assistant Secretary of War Colonel C. B. Robbins in 1928, "to encourage the manufacture of munitions in the United States by commercial manufacturers." A little earlier a du Pont official declared, "I can confidently state that General Williams believes that any steps which would hamper the private manufacture of munitions in the United States would be extremely detrimental to our national defense." Now, the "encouragement" that Colonel Robbins promised the arms makers includes everything from aid in manufacture to promotion of sales. It means the testing of new arms and of improvements in old ones, since private proving grounds are largely lacking in this country. Government reports of these tests are then used in sales promotion, even, at times, when they are "extremely confidential." Encouragement

further includes technical aid. Drawings and designs for all kinds of arms are lent to private manufacturers without charge, and it is accepted in the arms industry that the ordnance bureaus of army and navy are the first and generally the final recourse whenever technical assistance is needed. Sometimes a government expert hires out to a munitions factory for purposes of technical advice at the rate of \$40 a day.

The "encouragement" on the sales end includes a host of items. United States military attachés, for example, are generally information bureaus and contact men for munitions agents. Military missions are welcomed in this country and are shown by army and navy officials through government arsenals and through private factories—all with the purpose of making sales. Navy officers have been "lent" to South American governments to work out harbor- and river-defense plans, and their recommendations have been made in duplicate and on the same day to the South American government and to an American arms factory. Military and naval missions have been sent to other countries to advise and aid in the upbuilding and equipment of armed forces, and the orders have in large measure gone to American manufacturers. Finally, even such a spectacular measure as sending a flotilla of submarines around South America to encourage sales has been seriously considered, and an American warship was actually ordered to demonstrate American arms to another government.

The army and navy insist that these measures are justified by their desire to build up private munitions factories as an aid to national defense. The Commerce Department goes to similar extremes for a different reason—to further American exports. Its foreign representatives are always at the beck and call of arms salesmen. The Nye record is full of complimentary references by munitions agents to the Commerce Department. Sometimes this aid becomes a bit unusual, but it merely illustrates the ingenuity displayed by that department in aiding the traffic in arms. In China, for instance, an American aircraft factory had been erected, but its output was certain to be limited unless Chinese pilots were trained in sufficient numbers. The Commerce Department thereupon established flying schools in Canton and for the Nanking government, at which former American army fliers served as instructors.

These three ardent "encouragers" of the arms makers find themselves frequently blocked by the State Department. To be sure, the State Department has at times not been averse to pushing American munitions abroad through its ambassadors, but such instances are exceptional. In general, the State Department is both feared by the arms makers for its possible opposition and ridiculed for its peace efforts. The "cooky-pushers" in the State Department are always worth a laugh or a curse. There is a persistent effort to crowd the State Department out of the munitions-control picture or to bring it into line. The Treasury Department, finally, is an unknown quantity in munitions control.

The record of the various branches of the government in relation to attempts at arms limitation or control is worth

reviewing briefly. In 1925 a conference on the limitation of arms was held at Geneva and various plans for the control of the traffic were discussed, including licensing. One of the American delegates to that conference was General C. L. Ruggles, assistant chief of ordnance in the War Department. Before leaving for Geneva General Ruggles had a meeting with Aiken Simons, a du Pont man, in regard to the Geneva agenda. Simons's report of that meeting sheds a flood of light on the entire situation. He wrote in part:

General Ruggles stated that the United States was committed to the policy of cooperation in the limitation program, and that *the following license plan seemed to be the most harmless*, that the War Department was firmly committed to the policy of encouraging the private manufacture of munitions in the United States, and that the War Department would take care that the State Department protected such American industries. . . . [Italics supplied.]

General Ruggles said that the policy of the War Department was to aid private manufacturers in the United States and that the War Department would cause the Department of State to assume a helpful attitude, to which I replied that this had not been done heretofore and might not be done hereafter.

General Ruggles then suggested that the license be put under the Department of Commerce, which I agreed was better.

General Ruggles kept reiterating, "Would the du Pont Company object to the licensing system if it were fairly and uniformly enforced, if the State Department put no obstacles in the way of exports and backed up the du Pont Company in the event of illegal seizure of powder in transit by some foreign government?"

It is worth noting that the War Department representative considered the license system "harmless," that the Department of State was considered the only obstacle, that the Commerce Department was a self-evident friend of the arms makers, and that all these matters were discussed with the du Ponts before the Geneva conference took place.

At that very time Mr. Hoover, then Secretary of Commerce, called a conference of sporting-arms manufacturers, at which the whole subject of control was discussed. The following items from the minutes of that meeting are illuminating:

Mr. Nichols of the Colt Company stated that . . . he saw no reason why the license system would be of any advantage as applied to the United States, that the United States exporters of munitions were greatly handicapped by the hostile attitude toward them of the United States Department of State, whereas European manufacturers were not only aided by their foreign offices, but that army, navy, and diplomatic representatives of foreign governments actually assisted the sale of such items.

Mr. Hoover concurred to this, saying that the larger munitions, such as ships, heavy guns, etc., of European manufacturers were actually sold by government officials of those countries. . . .

Mr. Hoover then asked . . . if there was any division of opinion in the United States government by the various departments.

Major Casey stated that there always had been a difference in opinion between the Department of State on the one hand and the War and Navy departments on the other. . . .

Mr. Hoover stated that the United States will have to agree to some form of licensing but that he intended to

have a system whereby all United States customs commissioners would have absolute instructions to issue licenses automatically upon presentation of a consular visa and that every effort would be made by the United States government to eliminate red tape, delay, or hindrance.

Again it is worth noting that the Commerce, War, and Navy departments were looked upon as allies of the arms makers, that the proposed licensing system would operate "automatically," and that the State Department was the real enemy.

Somewhat later, in 1928, the so-called Burton resolution came before Congress, calling for an arms embargo against all belligerents in time of war. The House Foreign Affairs Committee approved the resolution and was ready to report it favorably. Meanwhile consternation reigned among all military and naval committees and officials. The House Military Affairs Committee hurried to get another hearing before the Foreign Affairs Committee, because this bill "might impair the preparedness program." Another hearing was granted, at which appeared the Secretary of War, the Secretary of the Navy, and the Assistant Secretary of War (the "Minister of Munitions"), and all of them were outspoken in opposing the embargo. The Secretary of War believed that the traffic in arms during the war "kept our munitions makers in practice." The Secretary of the Navy feared that the embargo would "reduce the ability of the private manufacturer to produce in quantity for the government in an emergency." To make certain that his objections would reach a larger audience, Secretary Wilbur wrote a letter to the *New York Times* which was printed even previous to his appearance before the committee. It was further brought out that the embargo resolution had been fully discussed by the General Board of the navy and probably also by the Cabinet.

A few years later, in 1933, the Fish embargo resolution was under consideration. Hardly had this been introduced when one munitions agent wrote to his office:

We have learned from what we consider a reliable source that the War Department objects to the original draft of the Congressional resolution empowering the President to put an embargo on shipments of United States arms to warring countries.

The du Ponts took up the matter with their friends in the Army and Navy departments. All of them were deeply interested. One of them promised to approach the Secretary of State, and another, it was indicated, would "take appropriate action to have the bill opposed on the floor of the House."

Finally, a word as to the operation of the Chaco embargo in 1934. The government itself has now recognized that this was a dismal failure, since it proposes to sue a dozen companies for violation. But the fault for this non-observance lay partly with the government itself. For the embargo order simply prohibited the "sale" of arms to Paraguay and Bolivia; it said nothing about "exports." At the same time the President appealed to the South American countries to aid in enforcing the embargo. This was virtually a confession that nothing was being done to stop the transshipment of arms to a branch office in another country or to any other intermediary. Then there was the problem as to the definition of "sales." The munitions makers claimed that "sales" included everything for which they had a contract on May 28, the date of the embargo. After some hesitation their inter-

pretation was accepted. This made it perfectly legal to ship munitions to the belligerents for months after the embargo went into effect. There is evidence also that some orders were deliberately antedated in order to make the dead line.

Such munitions makers as had branch factories in South America or working agreements with foreign companies readily found another method of evasion. One aircraft company immediately took steps to fill orders from its factory in Santiago in Chile. The du Pont Company turned an order over to its British ally, Imperial Chemical Industries, contenting itself with collecting commissions on the sale.

There was further a curious hesitancy on the part of officials to make clear-cut rulings on disputed points. The munitions makers wanted to know the government's definition of prohibited arms, but the officials at first referred them

to the courts for an interpretation. Government representatives later partly denied this allegation but asserted again that the final decision was up to the courts. No wonder there was a rather widespread opinion among arms makers and others that the government was reluctant to enforce the embargo.

All of this, from the well-defined attitude of the various government departments to the actual experience in munitions control during the last decade, points to one conclusion: only the Department of State has ever shown willingness to establish regulation of the arms industry that is more than "harmless." Whether a genuine embargo will result from the present neutrality law and the President's interpretations and rulings depends almost entirely on the State Department's representation on the Control Board.

Men in Chains

By MYRA PAGE

GOVERNOR TALMADGE of Georgia, speaking before the congress of the American Prison Association in Atlanta recently, discussed the chain gang. Men prefer it to the penitentiary, he said, because it provides them with a change of scene and the chance to see persons from the outside world. The "prison camp or chain gang is the most humane way to keep prisoners," he added. But the prisoners seem to differ with Georgia's Chief Executive. Not long ago the press carried an obscure item about the extradition from New York of another fugitive from the Georgia chain gang. The prisoner, Simon Minor, is reported to have knelt on the stone floor of his cell and prayed, "Please, God, strike me down before they take me back."

Most of those who read this probably thought the hapless man overwrought. But in the Southern states there are many who would understand all too well the desperate sincerity in Simon Minor's plea. A quick, painless death would be easier than rejoining that voiceless multitude of the South's *miserables*, whose convict-striped backs are bent ten to fourteen hours a day at unpaid hard-driven labor, quarrying rock and laying roads, and whose nights are passed in a cage on wheels, resembling a huge circus wagon with latticed iron bars. Frequent floggings or the "sweat-box," "stretching," and other forms of torture are their common lot. The term "chain gang" is a literal description of their plight. Iron cuffs fastened about the ankles of each prisoner are often spiked and usually chained to the iron cuffs of some twenty other men.

A man who can last ten years on a chain gain is exceptional. But Angelo Herndon, twenty-two-year-old labor organizer who drew down the wrath of the Georgia authorities by leading some thousand of Atlanta's white and colored unemployed to the courthouse to ask for relief, has just left for Atlanta, facing a sentence of eighteen to twenty years.

Herndon's is perhaps the most famous in a long series of cases in which active union men and labor organizers have received sentence to some Southern chain gang. Eleven tobacco workers of Tampa, Florida, were sentenced for activities during their strike a few years ago; organizers in

Birmingham and other cities have been arrested at various times on vagrancy charges and given from one to ten-year sentences; every big textile strike in the Carolinas has furnished new recruits to the road and chain gangs.

Labor's opposition to the chain gang is growing, reinforced by the increasing indignation of liberal-minded people of the professional and middle class. When an attempt was made to reestablish in Travis County, Texas, the system of chain-gang forced labor, a delegation from the Austin Labor Council and other workers' representatives voiced such bitter protest at the Commission Court's hearings that the plan was indefinitely postponed. The case for the chain gang was bluntly put by County Commissioner John E. Shelton during the hearings in these words: "You can't get a man to get out and do the work that these prisoners on the chain gang do. You know how a mule is. Get a wagon and hitch him to it, and then hit him right between the eyes. He'll pull."

A conspiracy of silence ordinarily surrounds the South's "original" method of very profitable convict labor. But lately this has been broken by two public scandals, resulting in legislative investigations in North Carolina and Georgia. Before we examine the evidence on chain-gang conditions produced by these investigations, it is worth noting that the following procedure has grown so customary that it is in danger of becoming another old Southern custom: recurrent public scandals, usually over the accidentally discovered death from flogging or other torture of a prisoner, lead to a state investigation; conditions are revealed that shock all sense of public decency; one or two chain-gang officials are charged with being responsible and are removed; perhaps a law is passed substituting the sweat-box torture for flogging of prisoners—and the public goes back to sleep, while the chain-gang system itself, which inevitably breeds exploitation, torture, and death, is left intact.

Invariably the legislative commissions conclude, as did these last two, that the almost unbelievable conditions and practices uncovered are only extreme cases, resulting from the wanton acts of some sadistic overseer or guard. But the succession of public scandals followed by investigations in Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, the Caro-

linas, Tennessee, Virginia, and other states during the last decade prove how tragically typical these conditions are. Various studies, such as John Spivak's well-known exposure of the Georgia chain gang in "Georgia Nigger," and Walter Wilson's "Forced Labor in the United States," as well as the first-hand report of a convict given in Robert Burns's "I Was a Fugitive from the Chain Gang," show that the chain-gang system is bound up with some of the most inhuman practices ever visited by man on man.

In North Carolina, where the whipping post and chains were abolished a few years ago by a people shocked by their cruelty, we learn from the latest investigation that the humane and enlightened methods now used include chaining men by their wrists and ankles to the iron bars of their cell and leaving them in this position for days at a time, their only food a little bread and just enough water, so the prisoners testify, "to whet your thirst." Also flogging is still practiced in some camps. It is to the credit of William Jones, a *Charlotte News* reporter, that these practices were brought into the open and an investigation forced. Learning by chance of the plight of two mutilated Negro prisoners, Mr. Jones undertook a personal inquiry and published his findings in the *Charlotte News*. These are the unsavory facts, afterward fully established before the state's investigating commission: Woodrow Wilson Shropshire and James Barnes, two Negro prisoners in the highway convict camp of Mecklenburg County, were punished for reputed insolence to a guard by being chained nine days and nights to the iron door of their cell. They were denied all food except "a half-biscuit whittled out on the inside" and a little water. Although it was January and subzero weather, there was no heat in the cell. Their feet, chained to the icy floor, gradually froze. Finally gangrene set in. For eighteen days the men received no real medical attention. When they were removed at last to Central Prison hospital, their condition was so serious that both feet of each man had to be amputated.

Other prisoners, white as well as colored, testified to having been similarly shackled for many hours and even days at a time. For the Negroes it was always worse. As one white prisoner remarked, "We used to hear their cries and pleas, and we'd say among ourselves, 'Our Lord Jesus had an easy time compared to these poor niggers.'"

The case of another Negro prisoner, L. Bogan, who died under torture, was also exposed at these hearings. Bogan's family had been notified that he had "died of natural causes" while on the road gang. But a former white prisoner came forward to testify that the Negro had died in agony while being punished in "solitary," chained to the door of his cell. His body had to be pried loose from its shackles with hammer and cold chisels. Other prisoners confirmed this. Yet the county doctor had written out a certificate of "death from acute dilation of the heart." Very likely poor Bogan did die of acute dilation of the heart—but hardly from natural causes.

Swaringen, another former prisoner, unburdened his conscience before the commission of an ugly secret which he had harbored for several years. In 1927, while on the gang, he had witnessed the flogging to death of a Negro prisoner by the name of Carter, and had been forced to help in the secret disposal of the body.

As a result of these revelations, six prison officials were

indicted. But they were soon released and all charges against them dropped, as the state concluded that there was "practically no evidence to connect them with the alleged mistreatments." So once again the South's system of convict forced labor, after outraging the nostrils of all decent people, was treated with a little disinfectant and allowed to continue on its course.

Likewise the recent investigation in Georgia, conducted by a commission of the state's legislative members, accomplished little more than the airing of terrific conditions. The commission's report to Governor Talmadge states that the conditions described in Robert E. Burns's "I Was a Fugitive from the Chain Gang" are "mild compared to conditions found in some camps." But there is a strong accent on the "some." The official statement released to the press by the Governor also admitted that "conditions are very deplorable," but again in "some camps." The implication was that the Georgia chain gang is not what Burns and John Spivak showed it to be—deplorable in all camps.

The full details of the Georgia commission's findings were not made public, but wardens were dismissed in Heard and White counties. The commission found that in Heard County "steel collars attached with chains running to steel anklets were used on convicts, and in some instances spikes were affixed to the ankles of prisoners." (These spikes give rise to a troublesome disease known as "shackle poison.") Extremely unsanitary conditions were discovered. Well men were chained in their bunks at night next to men ill with syphilis or tuberculosis. All used the same wash basins, towels, and eating utensils. Spread of disease was almost inevitable. The commission found that guards were placing convicts in stocks, flogging them, stretching them bound under a blistering sun, and leaving them in this state for hours at a time. (John Spivak gives photographic evidence of these and other barbarous practices in his book.) Nevertheless, the Georgia commission found itself able to report to the governor that conditions in Georgia's chain gangs were "fairly good."

Records show that the most common reasons for punishment are the blanket charges of "not working" and "talking back" to a guard. A man may be too ill to stand, but he is punished for "not working" by being placed in the sweat-box—an upright wooden box just large enough to incase a man, with no air except what may seep through one hole the size of a silver dollar. The box is placed in the sun or a hot metal plate is placed beneath, until the nearly smothered man becomes drenched in sweat. Hanging by hands and feet in primitive stocks is another method of "enforcing discipline."

These are the hazards awaiting Angelo Herndon, unless Governor Talmadge, in spite of his belief in the humaneness of the chain gang, consents to pardon him. Herndon has one chance for relief in addition to executive clemency. An application for a writ of habeas corpus will be heard in the local court on November 12. If the writ is denied, the case may ultimately reach the United States Supreme Court once more. Pending the November 12 hearing, Herndon is back again in Fulton Tower prison, where he was confined for more than two years while his case was being appealed by the International Labor Defense. He will be subjected to especially savage treatment, because he is what the Southern gentlemen term "a bad nigger," a labor organizer

and well-known red. He dared to act on his belief that hungry people have the right to demand work and bread; he dared defy the edict that "no nigger has any rights a white man has to respect." Above all, he broke through the color line and organized white and Negro workers together. In Georgia this constitutes "inciting to insurrection," the charge lodged against Herndon. He is a "bad nigger" who needs to be "put in his place."

The state of Georgia proposes to do this by putting him in chains, on a convict gang. At the first hint of "talking back" or any other imagined breach of prison discipline he can be tied and flogged, with no means of protest, shackled and "stretched" under a broiling sky until sunstroke and the

agony of cruelly twisted limbs and muscles rob him of consciousness. Not strong physically, he may contract some malignant disease from other ill prisoners. Again, if he survives all this, he may be "shot while trying to escape," a convenient phrase which has covered more than one mysterious death, not only in Nazi Germany but also in Southern convict camps.

All who are interested in the stubborn maintenance of civil liberties and the rights of labor to organize see in the Herndon case an opportunity to give support to these principles, as well as to strike a blow at the South's vicious system of convict labor. As a Southerner I am glad that there are so many Southerners among them.

England's Foreign Policy

By NEGLEY FARSON

THIS is a brief sketch of what I believe to be England's foreign policy and some American mistakes with respect to it. It is based on eleven years as a foreign newspaper correspondent, the last five of which I spent in London in almost day-to-day contact with British officials and the Foreign Office. First, the policy: Britain is rearming today, rapidly and radically, in order to regain its position of dominance in world affairs. It is putting the last touches to and gradually disclosing an understanding with the French that is tantamount to an outright Anglo-French military alliance to preserve the peace of Europe. Britain is preparing to reform the League and cut it loose from the slave-post of the Treaty of Versailles.

American mistakes can be roughly summed up as Mr. Stimson's Manchurian policy (beginning in 1929 with his two incredible notes during the dispute over the Chinese Eastern Railway between the Soviets and Chang Hsueh-liang), American actions at that abysmal swindle the 1930 London Naval Disarmament Conference, and in general the fatuous attitude of the so-called American "ambassadors at large" to the Geneva disarmament conference and naval talks during the last ten years. These things all tie in together, as I hope to explain.

First, what are Britain's reasons for rearmament; why, in fact, is its very foreign policy predicated on almost overwhelming rearmament? Either for reasons of economy or because of the genuine pacifist sentiment throughout the country, Britain, while waiting for general disarmament, disarmed itself by way of example, though others were rearming. It got itself into a position where the Continent was saying that it would not, or could not, fight—mostly could not; England, it was thought, was becoming decadent. If England would not or could not fight, then it was no good as an ally. If it was no good as an ally, then its assurances as to what it was prepared to do as an ally had no value. Therefore, said the Continent, do not trust England's promises. From that to "Don't trust England!" was an inevitable step. And this was the position in which British statesmen found themselves when Mussolini started his Ethiopian adventure this fall. In fact, it was because Mussolini himself believed something like this about England that he was encouraged to take a chance in Africa; this belief, and M.

Laval's promises to him, based on the same misconception of England's strength and courage, led the Duce to think he could go ahead while the French kept Britain from taking direct action to stop him.

Before the development of the Ethiopian crisis the British government had been reluctant to come out openly for rapid and heavy rearmament based purely on the German menace, which, to the well-informed, was daily becoming more dangerous. The government was afraid of British public opinion. For the same reason the Foreign Office was afraid to disclose the one thing that its permanent officials have been working for all along—an Anglo-French military alliance. Mussolini's challenge, however, awakened even the complacent British public to the danger of England's position; and, if there was any last vestige of domestic political hesitation on the rearmament question, the British Labor Party removed it when it voted for sanctions against Italy at its annual conference at Brighton. The fact that the British Labor Party did this not because of its love for the League or its opposition to Italy's imperialism, but because of British Labor's hatred of fascism makes small difference. By voting for sanctions the Labor Party also indirectly voted for the power to enforce them—that is, for rearmament. So real do British officials consider the necessity for rearmament that the government will almost certainly make no peace dicker with Mussolini until after the general elections in November—until reelection based on rearmament is finally secured. The British National Government does not intend to be caught in mid-stride on its rearmament program.

Just as the government is now coming out boldly for rearmament, so the Foreign Office is letting the secret Anglo-French alliance leak out. How far this goes is still officially kept secret; but most of us believe that when Barthou went to England in the spring of 1934 something very close to a working understanding between the French and British general staffs was formally concluded. Some well-informed observers believe that the recent Anglo-German naval agreement legalizing the German use of submarines was in part a British warning to the French that if the French did not completely comply with such an Anglo-French understanding, the British could still play with the Germans. Keener

observers, however, consider this Anglo-German naval agreement but another step on the road which, they say, the English are following toward the eventual abandonment of the Treaty of Versailles. To those in intimate contact with the British Foreign Office this seems the more logical interpretation.

Many persons well-informed in foreign affairs believe that the British not only waited too long for real disarmament, but that they waited too long before they forced the French to cease using the League of Nations as an exclusive instrument of French foreign policy. Tied to the Treaty of Versailles, the League has become merely an instrument for perpetuating the status quo. The British believe that the status quo cannot be maintained; that some amount of revision must be faced both by the League and by the French. Therefore, when they have achieved real rearmament and regained a position of power and prestige, and when they have shown the French what obligations an Anglo-French alliance entails on both parties, they intend to force the French to face real revision under the aegis of the League. The British are determined to make the League, instead of a static, an active and living force. As an example, it seems quite likely that the Germans will regain Memel next year with British moral support.

Thus the basic factors in British foreign policy today are real rearmament, a strengthened, perhaps openly announced military understanding with the French, and a reform of the League which will give the Germans and other unsatisfied nations some of the things the have-nots have been demanding from those who have. Furthering this last purpose, the British might even abandon their Ottawa imperial policy and throw open some of their colonies to free trade for the world's raw materials—a course which would remove the excuse for such land-grabbing policies as Mussolini's Ethiopian venture.

As to American mistakes and misconceptions regarding British foreign policy, I begin with Mr. Stimson's notes to the six powers on the Chinese Eastern Railway dispute because these incredible notes, suggesting a foreign consortium to settle the question, nearly provoked a war between the Soviet Union and Chang Hsueh-liang, and forced Japan in 1929 to show its long-term policy on the Manchurian mainland. Both notes were sent when the Russians had finally got Chang Hsueh-liang into a position where he was ready to talk peace. Both held out to Chang the hope of foreign support in his wrangle with the Russians, the one thing that the Chinese always count on; and both notes caused Chang to withdraw his peace emissaries and wait for the foreigner (the United States) to come to his aid. The Japanese, who have had reason to distrust American intentions in Manchuria ever since 1910, when Philander Knox as Secretary of State tried to neutralize Japanese and Russian concessions in that territory, thereupon informed Chang that if he did not soon accept some reasonable Russian offer, they would notify the Russians that they could enter Manchurian territory up to a certain point without Japanese protest.

Japan made its purpose plain in Manchuria in July, 1929. It made it even more plain by its demand at the London Naval Conference of 1929-30 for a fleet which would enable it to command the sea route to Manchuria. Therefore, when the Japanese finally did enter Manchuria in 1931, it was already clear to those who were willing to face the facts

that they intended to remain there. And this is where the United States, and a large part of the world, made a fatal mistake regarding British foreign policy. Mr. Stimson embarked upon a Manchurian policy that the British had no intention whatever of following. In the first place, the British realists regarded Japanese occupation of Manchuria as inevitable. Secondly, the British were not going to follow Mr. Stimson in a Manchurian policy which the United States could not enforce. In 1931 the Japanese navy—in the water—was considerably stronger than the American navy. The Committee of Imperial Defense, meeting in London, it is said, actually came to the conclusion that the combined British and American fleets—because the British would never liberate the Grand Fleet from European waters—could not administer a decisive defeat to the Japanese, at least not before Hong Kong and Singapore had fallen. To those who were in intimate contact with the British Foreign Office during the Manchurian affair it was therefore patent from the start that Stimson had grotesquely misjudged the British attitude and that he was needlessly alienating the Japanese by threats which the United States could not carry out. To ask why the British invoked sanctions against Italy for the Ethiopian invasion and did not invoke them in Manchuria against the Japanese shows a lack of understanding of England's attitude at that time. There is no parallel.

I cite the London naval conference as an American mistake because we there irrevocably lost our moral position on the whole disarmament question. Instead of disarming, we increased our fleet by 146,000 tons and our naval building budget from \$50,000,000 to \$200,000,000 for the next five years—if we wished to build up to the treaty. Our delegates, broadcasting to the American people the fantastic savings they claimed in scrapped tonnage and hypothetical battle-ships, were guilty of including thousands and thousands of tons that had long been obsolete—one ship had not turned a propeller since the Spanish-American War. We abetted at the conference and hailed as a success a treaty that did not settle one naval problem, that sharpened instead of softened Franco-Italian naval rivalry, and that, instead of abolishing submarines, legalized a new super-class—craft like the French *Surcorf*, which carries a six-inch gun and an aeroplane hangar, and can cruise from Toulon to Tahiti under one charge of fuel, literally a submersible cruiser. And although he attempted to deny it, Mr. Stimson, at that so-called naval-disarmament conference, asked for an American *Rodney*, a dreadnaught of 35,000 tons. Disarmament as such was killed in St. James's Palace during the naval talks of 1929-30. The Japanese, who had been building against the next conference ever since they left the Washington conference of 1922, demanded 70 per cent strength with the Americans in the eight-inch-gun cruiser class at London—and got it.

I cite the actions of the American delegates at subsequent Geneva disarmament and naval talks because their utterances during these sessions have grievously misled American opinion. That incurable optimist Norman Davis, after often asserting during these last tragic years that disarmament was "just around the corner," capped this performance by trying to persuade American opinion, via the American newspapermen who attended his press conferences, that the British would support the United States in forcing a five-five-three ratio upon Japan. Don't you believe it. The British have not, and never had, any intention of doing such a thing,

any more than they ever intended to follow Mr. Stimson out on the end of a limb in his mistaken Manchurian policy. And, as this article represents my own personal opinion about British foreign policy, I also believe that the American public should analyze very critically the assertions of the American delegates as to England's foreign policy in the forthcoming naval talks.

Correspondence

Treason or Anarchy

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

Your editorial entitled Patriotism, in *The Nation* of October 23, is destined to stir up much discussion and controversy. In the first place, it is entirely erroneous from a legal standpoint. You have mistaken treason for anarchy and these two felonies are as different one from the other as day is from night. What your editorial writer had in mind was anarchy, for which there is both a state law and a federal law. In New York State the penal law defines criminal anarchy and the felony of advocacy of criminal anarchy, for which the punishment is imprisonment for not more than ten years, or a fine of not more than \$5,000, or both. (Penal Law, Article 14, §§160, 161.)

Your article was wrong in stating, "When we put a man in jail or deport him to the country of his origin for belonging to an organization which advocates the overthrow of the government by force and violence, we are thereby committing an un-American act, and moreover an act which there is no federal law to justify." From a legal standpoint it is not an

un-American act, and there is a federal law to justify it. It may be found in the United States Code of Laws, Title 8, Aliens and Citizenship, Section 155, Deportation of Alien Anarchists. Alien anarchists are excluded from admission into the United States by Section 137 of the same law. Anarchists are inadmissible to citizenship by Section 364.

The First Amendment of the federal Constitution does not guarantee the right of any resident of the United States to advocate criminal anarchy, and it has been held by the United States Supreme Court, in *Turner vs. Williams*, 194 U. S. 279, that an act to regulate the immigration of aliens into the United States, which prohibited the entry into this country of persons generally known as anarchists, was not an abridgment of their rights under this amendment.

New York, October 20

LOUIS MARDER

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

Mr. Marder's legal corrections of your editorial call attention to the sharp distinction made in American law between the rights of citizens and of aliens. He is correct in pointing out that federal law permits the deportation of aliens for mere membership in organizations which the courts may hold advocate the overthrow of the government by force and violence.

Mr. Marder is incorrect in suggesting that there is any federal law to punish a citizen for such an advocacy. It is true that state laws penalize "criminal anarchy," "sedition," and "criminal syndicalism," which have been sustained by the Supreme Court as coming within the rights of the state (Justices Brandeis and Holmes dissenting in the leading cases).

Legal points aside, there is no denying the un-Americanism of the federal statutes applying to aliens, and the state statutes applying to citizens and aliens alike, in the light of the traditions of more than a century.

New York, October 24

ROGER N. BALDWIN

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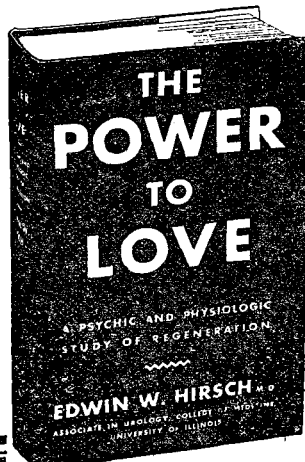
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Bootleg Coal

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

The editorial on the attitude of the Anthracite Institute toward bootleg coal, appearing in *The Nation* of October 9, is so misleading in its implications that I cannot believe it received your serious consideration.

Two-thirds of the cost of anthracite is spent for labor at the mine and colliery. These wage rates are fixed by agreement between the operators and the United Mine Workers of America, and are among the highest in American industry. They have never been reduced and are higher today than at the "war-time peak."

"Bootleg," or stolen, coal carries no such burden of labor costs. Mr. Fred Perkins, writing for the Scripps-Howard Newspaper Alliance, said these men were making "an average of \$2 a day." Your own Mr. Louis Adamic, in the January 9, 1935, issue of *The Nation*, said: "Through the year few bootleg miners and truckers average more than \$2.50 a day."

Nor does the difference in wage rates tell the whole story. The Anthracite Mining Laws of Pennsylvania, printed in booklet form, fill 108 pages. A cursory examination of them will show more than thirty sections and rules that are being violated daily by so-called "independent" miners. Most of these violations have to do with safety standards. Such laws and standards are highly desirable, but they add to the cost of legitimately mined coal. The coal thief, subject to no inspection or supervision, does not have to add this item to the cost of what he sells.

The economic significance of this situation seems to be that payment of less than the union scale and disregard of the mining laws enable the coal pirate to sell coal more cheaply than the coal companies, especially when he steals the coal.

The point that "a new spirit of hope" in the anthracite fields is due to the stolen coal industry is not well taken. Almost every branch of industry has shown an upturn during the present year, and it is to be expected that the same would be true of the anthracite industry. In fact, if it were not for the problem of stolen coal, the anthracite region would be even more inspired by a new spirit of hope than it is today. The millions of tons of illegal coal going to market would be replaced by legal coal taken out of the earth by miners receiving a high wage rate and would be better prepared for the consumer than that which is given only the crudest preparation by coal thieves or dealers in stolen goods.

Wherever the weights at which stolen coal has been sold have been checked—notably in Philadelphia and Baltimore—it has been disclosed that the consumer is usually short-weighted, frequently to the extent of 500 pounds to the ton, or 25 per cent. Furthermore, while some of the stolen coal is of good quality, a good deal of it contains foreign matter that is sure to make trouble when put in a furnace. It is impossible for the coal pirate to duplicate the methods of the large anthracite breakers, and the customer who buys stolen coal frequently has a great deal of difficulty in burning it.

New York, October 16 LOUIS C. MADEIRA, III,
Executive Director, Anthracite Institute

[No one disputes that bootleg coal is shoddier than Anthracite Institute coal, or that the bootleggers pay scant attention, if any, to union wages or safety requirements. Since it is a case of root hog or die, and since, quoting Louis Adamic back at Mr. Madeira, the bootleggers are in constant risk of their lives and eke out a miserable existence for all the risks they take, it seems remarkable that such a situation should exist at all, and explanations about cut labor costs and stolen

coal will not suffice. The Anthracite Institute misses the point of the editorial, which was that there still exists a market for coal, that it is a profitable market, and that people, through necessity, would rather pay less for poor, short-weight coal than pay more for good, honest-weight coal. If the anthracite industry, with all its centralization and all its modern machinery, cannot reach this market at a fair retail price, then it is no wonder that coal bootlegging flourishes. As for labor costs, all the trouble in the anthracite fields in the past ten years—and this includes the dual-union situation—springs largely from the wage issue. Despite agreements, the \$5.50 union scale is simply not paid by a great many collieries, and since a miner, even in good times, works roughly about one in three days, even when it is paid it does not amount to much. It must be remembered that most of these bootleggers are union men, and they are cutting their own throats when they resort to illicit mining. But with the legitimate industry moribund, what other solution is there, save the relief rolls?—EDITORS, THE NATION.]

Rewards of Merit

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

With reference to your editorial Reward-of-Merit Story in the October 30 issue of *The Nation*, you may be interested to know that both Jean Acme Le Roy and Eugene Augustin Lauste were members of the Bell Laboratories staff from 1929 until their deaths, in 1932 and 1935 respectively.

Mr. Le Roy was not mentioned in my book, "A Fugue in Cycles and Bels," because his work related primarily to the development of motion-picture projecting machines while that of Mr. Lauste was concerned with the recording of speech and music, which was the subject under discussion.

New York, October 21

JOHN MILLS

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

Your editorial captioned Reward-of-Merit Story was of especial interest to me, inasmuch as I happen to be the author of the letter published in the September 4, 1929, issue of *The Nation*, to which Mr. John Mills of the Bell Telephone Laboratories refers in his latest book. At the time I was endeavoring unsuccessfully to obtain from an indifferent and rather ungrateful industry some share of the recognition and economic security which I felt these two aged men deserved.

Mr. Lauste was the first to record photographically sound and scene on the same film and to reproduce it using a light-sensitive cell (selenium). His earliest patent, covering "A New and Improved Method of and Means for Simultaneously Recording and Reproducing Movements and Sounds," is now generally regarded as the direct ancestor of the modern talkie processes. As such, Mr. Lauste's experiments and testimony were of the utmost value to the Bell Telephone Laboratories in establishing the priorities in the numerous patent litigations which attended the development of the talkie.

Mr. Lauste died last June 27. Mr. Le Roy died August 9, 1932. In justice to the Bell Telephone Laboratories, it is only fair to say that both these men up to the date of their death received at its hands the recognition and economic security which had previously been denied them.

It would be a handsome thing (if somewhat unprecedented for a corporation) if the great telephone company could now make certain that the widows of these pioneers should be beyond the danger of want in the few years that are left to them.

New York, October 28

MERRITT CRAWFORD,
President, New Film Alliance

Labor and Industry

The *Amsterdam News* Is Winning

By ALLAN CHASE

It seems very clear to me that these workers were fired because of their organization activities and because of their membership in the Newspaper Guild. If the original discharges were motivated by economy there is no reason why Mrs. Davis and Mrs. Morse [part owners of the plant] should not have granted the guild an opportunity to talk it over with them. The workers impressed me as being reasonable. The failure of Mrs. Morse and Mrs. Davis to attend the conference in Mrs. Herrick's office last evening after they had promised the Mayor to attend simply serves to make more clear that the real issue in this case was a determination on the part of the employers to defeat unionization.

ELINOR M. HERRICK,

October 15

Director, Regional Labor Board

LITTLE else need be said about the causes of the editorial strike at the *Amsterdam News*, influential Negro New York paper, which began on October 9, although one might quote the opinion of William H. Davis, part owner of the *News*. "They were fired for guild activity," he said.

The fifteen locked-out workers knew that the strike was inevitable as far back as last August, when Mrs. Davis first balked even at discussing a guild contract at her shop. In December Mrs. Davis, with her lawyer Aiken Pope present, threatened to discharge the officers and active members of the *Amsterdam News* guild unit immediately. After this, Romeo Dougherty, the sports editor, resigned from the guild. On October 6 Mrs. Davis notified Obie McCollum, the editor, that she had deposed her husband as general manager, and that Romeo Dougherty had been appointed to the newly formed Executive Committee. By October 10 day and night picketing of the *News* plant was in full swing.

Strike headquarters were set up by the guild at the Hotel Dumas, a block away from the plant. The emergency committee of the New York Guild set aside \$400 weekly for strike benefits to the locked-out workers and strike costs. A broad committee of Harlem cultural, religious, trade-union, and social leaders was set up to aid the strikers.

No sooner was the strike under way than Mrs. Davis discovered that the *Amsterdam News* was not a weekly paper run for the sake of the advertising profit. No, the *Amsterdam News* was a great national Negro institution, and the guild was an outlaw, racketeering, dues-collecting outfit only interested in wrecking a great Negro institution. A few days later William Pickens of the N. A. A. C. P. discovered a new issue. The strike, he affirmed, was immoral, because it was a strike of Negro employees against Negro exploiters.

Heywood Broun, as president of the American Newspaper Guild, immediately brought a \$250,000 libel suit against Mrs. Davis and her clique. (If the suit is won all moneys will go to the guild.) He also answered Mr. Pickens in person at an Angelo Herndon protest meeting held in a Harlem church. Pickens, speaking before Broun, had had very little to say. Broun got up and remarked that Pickens shouldn't have said anything at all, since his stand on the

Amsterdam News strike had disqualified him as a spokesman for progressive thought. The Negro audience cheered.

Broun's attitude, that the one issue in this strike is the right of all workers to organize, is the prevailing one in Harlem today. Within two weeks the paper's circulation dropped some 53 per cent, and six of the largest advertisers were forced to withdraw their ads. How great the pro-strike feeling really is in Harlem can be seen from the actions of the advertisers. The Howard radio shop advertised in the first scab issue. Bill Chase, locked-out staff cartoonist, went down to picket the Howard store. Within thirty minutes the manager called up strike headquarters and begged them to take Chase away. He also agreed to keep his advertising out.

The first mass picket line on press day persuaded more than one newsboy not to handle the scab paper. The Davises had eleven pickets arrested. Magistrate Overton Harris was forced not only to release the arrested pickets, but also to affirm the guild's right to throw a picket line around the shop.

Immediately after this decision the red herring of the race issue was dragged across the trail by Mrs. Davis. Editorially, the *News* howled about the guild being a "white man's guild," and challenged it to get Negroes jobs on white papers. At the same time Ira Kemp, head of a small Negro nationalist society and very close to the scab clique, parked a truck in front of the strike headquarters. Between large American and Ethiopian flags the truck carried a big sign demanding to know why white Communists and Socialists were helping the white, outlaw, dues-collecting guild to wreck a great non-commercial Negro institution.

The people of Harlem have not been taken in by this mud-slinging campaign. They are angered by the spectacle of the same *Amsterdam News* which has hitherto campaigned for Negro equality in all labor unions now accusing the American Newspaper Guild—one of the rare labor unions in which there is not the slightest trace of discrimination—of being anti-Negro. The whites in the guild, from President Heywood Broun down, have been and are picketing, collecting funds, and *donating* funds to their seventeen locked-out fellow-workers. No sooner had the strike started than Broun demanded that the guild's constitutional clause barring all prejudice "should rise up from the page and join the picket line of our brothers in Harlem."

When Mrs. Davis hurled her stink-bomb, the strike committee was quick with its answer:

Just as the reactionary Southerner hurls the ugly phrase "nigger lover" at any white man who makes common cause with the Negro, so does Mrs. Davis hurl the phrase "white man's guild" at a union in which whites and Negroes are on an equal footing. The *Amsterdam News*, by attacking the unity of black and white newspapermen, is sacrificing the best interests of our race to its own selfish ends as an employer of labor.

The guild never wanted the race issue to be raised, and its answer to Mrs. Davis has probably spiked the attempt.

The formerly pro-labor editorial policy of the paper has had its effect on the former readers of the paper. Three weeks after the strike began, the paper carried a front-page story signed by Edgar T. Rouzeau, a guild member who did not join the strike. "I believe," ran the lead, "that the *Amsterdam News* may be discontinued as a publication most any day. It is losing revenue daily and is without an emergency fund. It is heavily in debt already."

Mrs. Davis is frantic. Her emotional appeals accomplish nothing. Beginning with the next issue, the price of the paper will be cut from ten to five cents. Already a wide boycott of advertisers is under way. The women of Harlem

dropped notes in their milk bottles to the effect that they would stop taking Sheffield's milk unless the quarter-page ad was removed. The ad has been removed.

The strike has demonstrated two facts. The first is that white employers and black employers have one thing in common—they are against all labor unions of any description, white, black, or non-discriminating. The second is emblazoned weekly in the masthead of the scab sheet in the label of the A. F. of L. Allied Printing Trades Council of New York. If the Newspaper Guild were affiliated with the A. F. of L., would A. F. of L. printers get out a paper on which A. F. of L. editorial workers were striking?

Strike-Breaker Number One

By HERMAN WOLF

"Have you a gun on you?" the court asked.

"Sure."

"And why do you come into this court with a gun?"

"I was expecting to go to work this morning."

THE work: strike-breaking. The scene: a courtroom in New York, where forty strike-breakers who took a disastrous jaunt to Georgia during the 1934 textile strike are suing their boss, Pearl L. Bergoff, for back pay.

In no other country in the world could this scene have taken place, for the strike-breaking industry is wholly a product of American capitalism, and has been neither admired nor copied by foreigners. Historians who have painted pretty pictures of American industries and their leaders have given scant attention to this profession. Edward Levinson, labor editor of the *New York Post*, at last exposes this industrial racket in all its brutality in "I Break Strikes!"*

Mr. Levinson's volume is both a biography and a history. It is the biography of Pearl L. Bergoff, the boy who outgrew his curls and girlish name to become the hated Red Demon—undisputed king of the strike-breakers and confidant of the masters of American industry. It is also a history of famous American labor wars, of the methods and activities of more than a hundred strike-breaking agencies, and of the legislation—and lack of legislation—connected with this most criminal of all legal professions.

In the frontispiece of "I Break Strikes!" the reader comes face to face with nine "prison-pedigreed" strike-breakers, two of whom have been convicted of manslaughter. Complete police records for twenty of the most notorious of Mr. Bergoff's warriors are given in a special chapter devoted to his army. Among the men Bergoff took to Georgia were more than two dozen assorted criminals.

Pimp and pickpocket, thief and footpad, swindler and slugger, fence and fugitive, briber and usurer, blackmailer and extortionist, wire tapper and abductionist, gambler and gunman, dope fiend and rapist, murderer and madman, they have all placed their left hands on their hearts, raised their right hands in oath, and been sent forth to uphold law and order.

Strike-breakers are divided into two groups, nobles and "finks"—a term applied to the professional scab years ago

by the Industrial Workers of the World. It is the nobles who attack strikers and attempt to stir them to violence, and who also protect the lowly finks and keep them from deserting when the job becomes too hazardous. In any large strike, quarters must be established for the strike-breaking army, and it is here that the noble gets his rake-off from the finks on cots, food, smokes, and amusements. While the agency robs the client, the nobles rob the finks. Two Bergoff aides have been killed in squabbles over crap-game spoils.

Violence and death travel with Bergoff. The first two of the fifty-four deaths that have marked his strike-breaking career occurred in his initial campaign against New York longshoremen in 1907. Two years later Bergoff was called to serve the Pressed Steel Car Company at McKee's Rocks, Pennsylvania. The town "became, for fifty-five days, an armed camp and a gory battlefield," writes Mr. Levinson. "Thousands of armed strikers slept, guns and clubs in hands, at plant gates," prepared to repel the invading strike-breakers. On one Bloody Sunday seven strikers and four opponents were killed. The next year Bergoff men were hired by the Philadelphia Rapid Transit to spy on its men and form a company union. When the expected walkout came, imported strike-breakers "rode the trolleys like wild men, killing sixteen men, women, and children in less than two months." A trolley strike is a "Christmas dinner" to finks, for it gives them free play "to steal the fares, short-change the customers, and operate the car on whichever street pays best." One street-car strike which turned out to be no Christmas dinner took place in Kansas City in 1917, when 5,000 citizens aided strikers in deporting the Bergoff men.

R. J. Coach, Cleveland's most famous strike-breaking chief, once observed: "There's more money in industry than there ever was in crime." With this statement Bergoff could hardly disagree, for by 1924 his firm had a \$10,000,000 profit. "Breaking a strike is a costly affair for employer as well as worker," writes Mr. Levinson, "but a fabulously profitable enterprise for the strike-breaking agency. There are few other lines of endeavor in which a person with no special training, no credit or standing in the business world, and no investment whatever can gross from a hundred thousand to a million dollars in a month." The City of New York gave Bergoff \$27,000 for a little job in 1907, and spent \$136,000 in six days of the street cleaners' strike four

* "I Break Strikes! The Technique of Pearl L. Bergoff." By Edward Levinson. Robert McBride and Company. \$2.50.

years later. Three strikes—at McKee's Rocks, Bayonne, and Kansas City—netted Bergoff over \$500,000. The 1916 transit strike in New York brought him \$350,000. His banner year was 1920, when he received \$712,602 from the Brooklyn Rapid Transit and \$1,225,000 from the Erie Railroad. At least 50 per cent of these sums was clear profit.

Bergoff has seen service in more than 300 strikes in half the states of the Union. The Waldorf, Astor, and Plaza hotels have been among the elite of his clientele. All of them entertained prison graduates during the hotel and restaurant strikes of 1934. Another of the Red Demon's recent jobs was for the Warren Piece Dye Works in New Jersey, where his men represented themselves as NRA officials and advised the strikers that Uncle Sam didn't approve of their walkout.

In recounting the past history and present status of private detective and strike-breaking agencies, Mr. Levinson performs a distinct service to the American labor movement. Not since Sidney Howard wrote "The Labor Spy" more than a decade ago has the work of these agencies been described in such detail. In "I Break Strikes!" one finds an exposé of the technique of Jim Farley (not Roosevelt's Jim), of the Pinkerton and Burns agencies, of Baldwin-Felts, of Mooney and Boland, and of a host of lesser lights. Here, too, is a graphic picture of the famous Ludlow, Colorado, massacre, in which twelve children and seven adults perished when soldiers and Baldwin-Felts guards, hired by Rockefeller's fuel company, set fire to the miners' tents.

While the strike-breaking field has been narrowed today by company unions, racketeers, and private espionage systems,

there is not a large city in the country which does not have a host of agencies. Towering above Bergoff's other competitors is the Railway Audit and Inspection Company, which has scores of affiliates throughout the country and, according to Mr. Levinson, will handle most of the strike-breaking jobs of the future. This bureau "provides the most thorough strike-breaking system in the country, from spies to strike-breakers, to tear-gas bombs and Thompson sub-machine guns." It has served, among others, Consolidated Gas of New York, Brooklyn Edison, General Motors, Western Union, Chase National Bank, United States Steel, Kelvinator Refrigerator, and Firestone Tire and Rubber Company.

Mr. Levinson has collected the evidence and presented the indictment against the strike-breakers. He shows that despite many government surveys there exists today no effective legislation aimed at the strike-breaking racket. Mr. Bergoff claims that if his business "is a nefarious business, then it is nefarious for business and industry" to hire him. When his detective license was revoked last month, he commented, "I don't give a damn about the license. I broke strikes for seventeen years without any license and I'll go on stronger than ever." There seems no question that the use of industrial spies, whether obtained through strike-breaking agencies or private espionage systems, is in violation of the Wagner industrial-disputes law. On motion of Julius Hochman, general manager of the Dress and Waistmakers' Union, International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, the recent A. F. of L. convention adopted a resolution calling for a federal investigation of strike-breaking and private detective agencies. Such an investigation is certainly in order.

In the Deep Middle West

By RAY L. KRINGER

Decatur, Illinois

DIRECT action by vigilante mobs—common in California and a few other states—has made its appearance in Illinois. A mob of about seventy-five persons, led by business men, recently assaulted and drove out of Sullivan, Illinois, a shoe workers' union leader from Mattoon, a neighboring city. The union representative, Harold Davidson, would have been tarred and feathered had the mob been able to secure the necessary tar. Disappointed by this upset in their plans, the leaders contented themselves with abducting Davidson, striking him, and threatening him with worse violence as they sent him on his way with a warning never to return to Sullivan.

A grand-jury investigation, virtually forced by the Illinois Federation of Labor and newspaper publicity, resulted in no indictments. Evidence and names, however, were not lacking, for the sheriff of the county and the Sullivan chief of police reached the scene before the mob dispersed, and in a small town police authorities know personally or recognize at sight nearly every citizen. Besides, ringleaders of the mob made no effort to conceal their part in the attack, since hysteria against the "outside agitator" mounted even higher after he had been run out of town.

The attack occurred on September 7. It was the culmination of a series of developments during a period of

about fifteen months in towns where branches of the Brown Shoe Company of St. Louis are located. The Brown company has fourteen plants in small towns of Illinois, Indiana, Tennessee, and Missouri. The company invests no money in its factory buildings and does not own the machinery in the plants. The factories are built by public subscription, the Brown company securing title to the buildings when the terms of an agreement to meet a specified payroll are fulfilled, usually within a ten-year period. If the payroll of, say, five million dollars is met in six years, the company is under no obligation to operate the plant for the remaining four years. The machinery is leased from the manufacturers.

In the early days of the NRA the International Boot and Shoe Workers' Union sought to organize the workers in the Brown plants. In seven of the factories it succeeded in forming locals. Among the towns organized were Sullivan, Mattoon, and Charleston, all within forty miles of one another in the corn belt of Illinois. At no time, however, were all the workers in each plant signed up in the locals. Davidson was the militant president of the Mattoon local.

After the collapse of the NRA evidence of a drive to smash the unions was seen. First, the Charleston factory was closed because of "slack business," and a large part of the machinery was shifted to another plant, where production picked up at once. Then the Sullivan factory was shut down

after a minor dispute involving a union worker in one department of the plant. Ten days after the Sullivan plant was closed, the members of the local met, voted to dissolve, and burned their charter. Dissolution of the Sullivan local was followed a week and a half later by similar action on the part of the Charleston local. The Charleston local took care to return its charter to the union headquarters in Boston. An announcement by company officials of an impending shutdown was all that was necessary, apparently, to get the workers in Mattoon to turn in their charter. Admission that the shutdowns in the various factories were not due solely to "lack of orders" came unwittingly from the president of the Brown company, J. A. Bush, who told union officials at a conference in St. Louis that closed factories would not be reopened with "trouble-makers."

The Sullivan plant reopened less than two weeks after the union burned its charter. It became evident then whom Mr. Bush regarded as trouble-makers. Employment, or re-employment, at the Sullivan factory was placed in the hands of a "citizens' committee" consisting of some 150 business and professional men of the city, but dominated by five persons who kept their identity secret. Applications were taken by agents of the committee, who set up a desk in the master-in-chancery's office in the county courthouse. Needless to say, militant former union members received scant consideration. T. H. Lawyer, president of the disbanded union, was warned to leave town or "suffer the consequences." He and his family moved away.

Early in September Davidson went to Washington to confer with officials of the National Labor Relations Board. Upon his return to Mattoon he said that he had been advised to get affidavits of unfair treatment from former union workers in Sullivan. Accordingly, he went to Sullivan on September 7 to secure the affidavits. By arrangement at a meeting of the citizens' committee the night before, the fire siren atop the municipal lighting plant was sounded to notify the vigilantes that the union leader was in town. The mob gathered quickly. Davidson was found in a butcher shop, where he had gone to talk to the owner, a city commissioner. He was hustled from the store, pushed into an automobile, and taken to a spot outside of town, also prearranged. When it was discovered that no tar was available for smearing Davidson, a ringleader suggested that the mob "muss him up a bit." A hardware merchant struck Davidson twice in the face and others rolled him about on the ground.

Presently Sheriff Russell Freesh arrived and later Chief of Police Dave Snedeker drove out to the scene. The sheriff cautioned the mob against doing anything too rash, but added that if the Sullivan citizens were bent on beating Davidson he wished they would "take him out of my county." Davidson was shoved into his own automobile, which had been driven to the scene by a member of the mob, and told to "get going and don't come back." Davidson said that he recognized a United States mail carrier as one of the ringleaders of the mob. He sent a telegram to the National Labor Relations Board telling of the attack and disclosing that the contents of his brief case "were stolen or destroyed."

The incident was brought to the attention of the Illinois Federation of Labor at its state convention the following week in Belleville. The federation wired the state's attorney of Moultrie County, Robert Martin, demanding that he prosecute the offenders. When Martin sent an evasive reply,

the labor federation authorized Secretary Victor Olander to place the case in the hands of the attorney general of Illinois and to request the governor to furnish a special guard for Davidson if he appeared in Sullivan to testify at a grand-jury investigation. Moultrie County authorities hastened to Mattoon to advise Davidson that his safety would be guaranteed in Sullivan.

The case was taken before the regular session of the grand jury on September 23. Davidson appeared, accompanied by a representative of the Boot and Shoe Workers' Union. His inquisitors were less interested in the assault upon the labor leader than in his "business in Sullivan" and in continued union sentiment among the shoe-factory workers. Concern over the question of whether the Sullivan local had actually been dissolved was evident in the question put to Davidson: "Are former members of the Sullivan local still members of the union since the charter was burned?" Only a handful of witnesses from among known members of the mob were subpoenaed. Although the mob had included approximately seventy-five persons, only a dozen or so had taken an active part in manhandling Davidson, the others being described as onlookers. No indictments were returned.

Meanwhile the Brown factory in Charleston is preparing to reopen. The union has been dissolved. Davidson was expected to attend the meeting on September 11 at which the Charleston local surrendered its charter, and another citizens' committee was all ready to receive him. But the mob was cheated of an opportunity to attack the Mattoon man by his failure to appear. No explanation was given of the sudden decision by the Charleston union workers to disband; the local had voted twice in the preceding three weeks to retain its charter.

The Charleston citizens' committee is now seeking signatures of factory workers to the following pledge addressed to W. R. Eakin, general manager of the Brown Shoe Company: "I want to get back to work on such terms and conditions of employment as you may stipulate." The citizens' committee claims that more than 500 of the 1,100 workers in the factory have signed pledge cards.

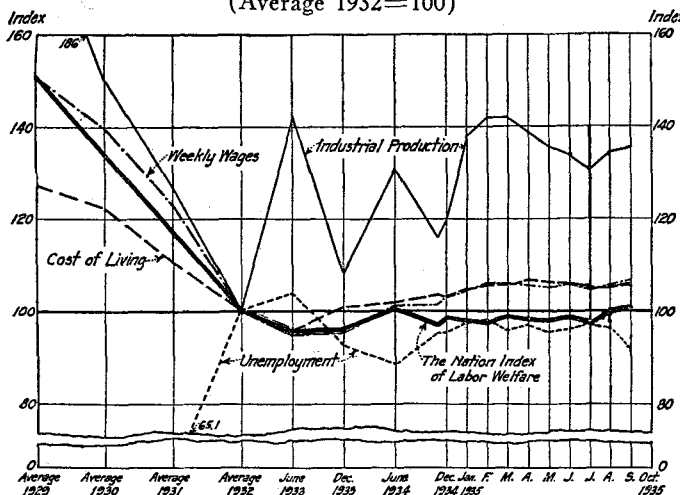
The exact part the shoe company played in all these proceedings remains undisclosed. John J. Mara, president of the International Boot and Shoe Workers' Union, says: "It seems as though some hidden hand was able to bring about a situation which resulted in the return to our general office of the charters sent to locals." It may be significant that the activities of the so-called citizens' committee in each case have dated from the arrival in town of one A. H. Ahner, employed by the Brown company as "labor-relations counselor."

The shoe company, however, has now run into difficulty. On October 30 the Regional Labor Board in St. Louis issued a complaint against it for "unfair labor practices," citing charges of the union that the company "discriminated" in dismissing four union employees in its Salem plant, and that "officers and agents" of the company "induced the Citizens' Committee to coerce, intimidate, and interfere with the employees in the exercise of their right" to organize and bargain collectively. Hearing on the complaint was set for November 13 before Dean Eberle of the St. Louis University Law School, who was appointed Special Commissioner by the board.

The Labor Index

FOR the first time since June, 1934, *The Nation* Index of Labor Welfare shows working-class living standards to be above the 1932 level. Continuing the advance started in the previous month, employment and pay-rolls both increased materially during September. The average weekly wage in the manufacturing and non-manufacturing industries rose from \$21.60 to \$21.90, which was more than sufficient to offset a $\frac{1}{2}$ of 1 per cent increase in the cost of living. While the gains are largely attributable to seasonal factors, they are more substantial than in any other autumn in recent years. As compared with September a year ago, which was a particularly bad month on account of the textile strike, real wages have advanced nearly 4 per cent, while unemployment has declined by at least 200,000, and the number on relief, including PWA workers, has dropped by more than two million.

THE CHART OF LABOR WELFARE
(Average 1932=100)



Although it is encouraging in comparison with last year, the economic status of the working class remains far below that of 1929. At 107 per cent of the 1932 average, wages still are 29 per cent under the pre-depression level, as compared with a decline of only 17 per cent in the cost of living. This means that the average employed worker is able to purchase only 86 per cent as much as six years ago. If the losses of the eleven million unemployed are included, the total deterioration in the position of the working class is approximately 30 per cent.

Owing to the discrepancy between the estimates of the cost of living prepared by the National Industrial Conference Board and those compiled by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the revised figures for July and August shown below differ somewhat from those previously reported:

(1932=100)

	September	August	July
Industrial Production	136*	134	130
Average Weekly Wages	107.4*	105.9	104.3
Cost of Living	105.5*	104.9†	104.4†
Real Wages	101.8*	101†	99.9†
Unemployment	92*	96	97
Index of Labor Welfare	101.3*	100.1†	98.6†

* Preliminary. † Revised.

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Books and Drama

"In Darkest Asia"

The Asiatics. By Frederic Prokosch. Harper and Brothers. \$2.50.

THIS unusual novel—if novel it is—begins and ends without explanation. At the top of page 1 the narrator is walking down the streets of Beirut inviting his soul; on page 423 he takes abrupt leave, "feeling very happy" somewhere in China. In between he has scraped an acquaintance with various persons, mostly sinister; he has been a prisoner in Turkey, has smuggled dope, visited a maharaja, been captured by bandits, and has made love to various girls whom he gets rid of with an ease which, life being what it is, seems rather more remarkable than the ease with which the inevitable sweet surrender is made to eventuate. Also—and this is more important than any of the other things—he has smelled Asia at a number of its most odoriferous points.

As is not unusual in tall tales, our hero exhibits a readiness to get into trouble which would verge on the moronic if it affected anyone except the central personage in an adventure story. As a matter of course he throws in his lot with any chance acquaintance who gives obvious signs of being untrustworthy, and he no sooner sees a desire for murder beginning to gleam in a companion's eye than he accepts an invitation to journey into some nice inaccessible spot. He is, according to accompanying publicity, an American youth in his middle twenties and doubtless he will mature—if he lives long enough.

The most remarkable things about the book are, however, that it is vastly entertaining and that, despite all the extraordinary happenings, the tone is lyric rather than dramatic. The author recounts his adventures in a simple, matter-of-fact way as though wandering about Persia with a dubious passport and no money were a usual procedure. What he is really interested in is a poetic abstraction called Asia. What he is out to do is to sense as deeply and as luxuriantly as he can the meaning of a very old, very weary, very corrupt, and very ill-smelling civilization—of a way of life which is ostensibly based upon a determination to be free of desire and of the flesh but which may, perhaps, have only arrived at a state where desire has been reduced to appallingly unadorned manifestations, and where the neglect-born disease makes the would-be ascetic rather more aware of his flesh than the Western sensualist usually is. In the temples they describe the road to Nirvana but around the urinals the despairing perverts gather in miserable company.

The old women sat at the waterside with their yellow jars, chatting with queer stiff movements, looking like a group of tough and garrulous birds. . . . God knows what they talked about—insane little bits, raggedy odds and ends of life, gray pieces of nothing. Their breasts hung down like flat leather patches and their hair blew like straw in the sharp November wind. They were hideous, they were mindless, they didn't have anything left out of life, anything at all.

"Asia—well," he said, "the thing about Asia is its vagueness really. There you have it. Despair is perhaps too definite and startling a word. Allow me to enlarge. There is a sense of people searching for something over long centuries: not finding it precisely: never being quite sure: growing absent-minded: beginning to forget what they were looking for, to forget that they were looking for anything. . . . Do you perceive?"

Obviously Mr. Prokosch can write. He has an accent of his own. His manner is simple, almost colloquial, and this easy offhand air does much to conceal the essential romanticism

of the entire work. The only real question is the question how deeply the thing is really felt, how much of what he has to say springs from anything deeper than a sort of luxurious green sickness. Out of the atmosphere of our times the young author has drawn a Spenglerian despair for the human race. He hints that the deliquescence of the Asiatic is the penultimate phase of all human souls. "The trouble," says one of the characters, "isn't with the West. It isn't with the East. . . . It's with man. He's had his day." But it is difficult not to feel in the almost loving description of human depravity as well as in the easy acceptance of the blackest pessimism a youthful bravado, a more or less individual manifestation of that adolescent melancholy which shocks every thoughtful youth into a pleasurable sense of his own fortitude.

It would be interesting to know how much of the author's wild journey is fact and how much is fiction. From internal evidence it is difficult to say, for the simple reason that the observations and the reflections, boiled down to their solid residue, are really little more than the current commonplaces about Darkest Asia. Possibly Mr. Prokosch did and saw and thought all that his hero does and sees and thinks. But given an ardent imagination, he would not really have needed to do so, and it is a safe guess that before he started he already knew, in a general way at least, what it was that he was going to do and see and think. All of which, however, is no reason against repeating that "The Asiatics" is a very entertaining book written by a man who already knows very well how to write.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Macedonian Cycle

Express to the East. By A. Den Doolard. Translated from the Dutch by David C. De Jong. Smith and Haas. \$2.50.

EUROPE, with its wars and rumors of wars, has taken kindly to this record by a Dutch novelist of twenty-five years of revolution and counter-revolution in the Balkans. If one must look for a reason, it is probably that the Continental reading public has been more than a little disturbed by the assassination of the dictator-king of Yugoslavia, the series of mysterious motor accidents, and the recent other evidences that this particular section of Europe is still a potential breeding-spot of general European trouble. It is anxious to give body to its somewhat vague impression of the region which provided the spark for one world conflagration, and which may conceivably provide the spark for another, at the same time that it gratifies a perhaps less legitimate curiosity concerning the organization and methods of the secret societies which keep this spark alive. Both these purposes are admirably served in Den Doolard's novel, and a reading of it should prove for American as it undoubtedly has for Continental readers a fascinating as well as an instructive experience.

The opening chapters deal with the events leading to the tragic uprising of the Macedonian Bulgars, under the secret revolutionary society, the V. M. R. O., against their Turkish overlords in 1903. The author tries to interest us in the personality of one of the popular leaders, the *voivoda* Damian Drangov, but the onward movement of history forces psychology to take to its feet. In a scene which a writer like André Malraux would have drained of its last ounce of dramatic potentiality, the Dutch novelist is content to relate the death of his nobly patriotic hero with the barest statement and description. The reason is undoubtedly that the range of consciousness of all the characters in this earlier section is too limited to supply the right kind of psychological complexity.

But this is not exactly the case with the *voivoda's* daughter Mitya, born on the eve of the rebellion, who is destined to leave her school teacher's desk to become one of the secret agents of the V. M. R. O. when it comes to life again after Macedonia has exchanged the tyranny of the Turks for the equally slaughterous tyranny of the Serbs. In Mitya's relationship with the veteran conspirator Fodor Alexandrov there is worked out an identification of romantic passion with revolution which gives to the book, as a novel rather than a specimen of novelized history, its most intense interest. Fodor is a more intellectual and hence more advanced exponent of the cause of which Damian had become the rhetorical symbol. If he has availed himself of German gold during the Great War, he is not inattentive to certain proposals of Lenin immediately afterward. In fact, he has just concluded that between the Serbs and a few rich members of his own race as owners of Macedonia there is little difference, as there had been little difference between the Turks and the Serbs; he is returning from a secret meeting with a Soviet emissary in Vienna when a bullet from his own organization puts an end to his career. After his death Mitya becomes a Medea-like spirit of vengeance, serving as a Communist agent in the now reactionary V. M. R. O., and finally getting blown up on the Orient Express as a reward for her duplicity. The book closes with a moving account of her burial by a disapproving uncle, the *unpolitische* farmer brother of the valorous Damian, who has been the center of gravity throughout the whole long-drawn-out pattern of intrigue and passion.

All this last quarter of the work is exciting, fascinating, and emotionally stirring without ever descending to the banalities which usually accompany such material. And for these chapters alone the work can be recommended. As a whole it suffers from a disproportion of treatment which undoubtedly comes out of its author's uncertainty or timidity concerning his theme. It is almost as if he has not discovered his theme until it is too late in the book to work it out with proper emphasis and arrangement. The real theme does not emerge until Fodor realizes the futility of nationalistic rhetoric in a Europe whose common language has a more metallic ring. This is the lesson which recent Macedonian history, presented in even the most casual fashion, would seem to demonstrate. From the novelist, however, we expect something over and above the lesson, something more "serious," in the Aristotelian sense, than history. An earlier recognition of the theme would have given to the book from the beginning more of that formal intensity which is to be found only in the few scenes toward the end; and it would also have given much broader implications to the gory and sinister period of history with which it deals.

WILLIAM TROY

The Science of Heredity

Genetics. By H. S. Jennings. W. W. Norton and Company. \$4.

GENETICS, or the study of biological inheritance, bids fair to remodel our social and economic world as decisively as did the theory of evolution. Today we have the guide lines to future researches on such problems as the inheritance of genius or imbecility in man, of speed in horses, of milk productivity in cows, of sugar content in cane. In other words, a basic principle is in our hands which can be applied to both plants and animals.

The cornerstone of genetics was laid by Gregor Mendel, but his discoveries were buried for years in an obscure Austrian journal. Meanwhile the theory of evolution was built, without benefit of genetics. Much time was spent in speculat-

ing on what changes Darwin might have made in his theories had these facts been part of his mental equipment. But Mendel's contribution suffered not at all from its enforced hibernation. When it was finally rediscovered, much patient study was still necessary to elaborate the essential facts with sufficient clarity to permit their application to the theory of evolution. The mutual interaction of these two theories is the problem of today.

Until the last few years genetics developed most rapidly in America, owing largely to the discovery of the vinegar fly, *Drosophila melanogaster*, by Thomas Hunt Morgan and his coworkers. Its speed of reproduction—a new generation every two weeks—and the ease with which it can be bred have given these workers a large advantage over all others in the field. It is the work on this fly that has elucidated many obscure points and completed the foundation on which the science of genetics now rests.

Recently public attention has been called to these genetical studies by their recognition and application in several quarters. Two Nobel prizes in medicine have gone to this field—to Thomas Hunt Morgan for his basic development of genetic theory, and to Karl Landsteiner for his elucidation of the inheritance of human blood groups. The facts of blood-group inheritance, long used by medicine in connection with blood transfusion, have lately been admitted to the bar as valid evidence in cases of disputed paternity. So-called genetic principles have also been applied in the recent attempt to eliminate feeble-mindedness in Germany. This volume ought to be welcome, therefore, to the informed lay mind. It comes from the pen of an outstanding thinker and research worker. Moreover, the author has at no time allowed the details of his experiments to obscure from him the wide applications of this rapidly advancing field.

Professor Jennings describes in detail the work that connected the chromosomes with the inheritance of particular characters. Once the chromosomes were definitely known as the bearers of heredity, their behavior under normal and experimental conditions gained enormous significance. Innumerable attempts were made to alter them without killing or sterilizing the animal. Of all the methods tried, only X-rays and gamma radiations from radium had any permanent effect. Large hereditary changes, entirely comparable to the large changes termed mutations occasionally observed in nature, were produced by these means.

However, the chromosomes are too few in number for each to be responsible for a single hereditary character. *Drosophila*, the vinegar fly, has only four pairs of chromosomes, but hundreds of known hereditary characters; so that each chromosome must control many different factors. This deduction was soon verified experimentally, and definite spots on the chromosome were found to have definite functions in the production of single characters, such as eye color. These spots were called genes. The arrangement of the genes in a straight line in the chromosome like beads in a necklace was next established. All this had to be done without the scientist being able to see the genes, as they are much too small to be observed under a microscope. The experiments which led to these conclusions are one of the best examples in biology of inductive reasoning.

Professor Jennings includes a splendid résumé of the state of our knowledge of inheritance in man. The difficulties here are obvious—our inability to control mating, and the small number of progeny. However, certain well-marked defects, such as hemophilia and color blindness, have been able to be traced, and have been shown to be produced by a defective gene in the sex chromosome. The lively problem of how much independence of their environment the genes have is illuminated by the studies on identical twins. The occurrence of genius

in obscure families and conversely the appearance of imbecility in the offspring of highly intelligent parents are also discussed in this chapter, which should be read by all enthusiasts on social betterment via the knife.

Unfortunately not all the chapters are written with the same keen lucidity. The superabundant use of parenthesis and case histories will make it difficult for the lay reader to follow the thought, but the information will well repay the effort. There exists no general review of the mechanics of heredity comparable with this book.

HUGH H. DARBY

Life After Legend

The Street I Know. By Harold E. Stearns. Lee Furman. \$2.75.

HAROLD STEARNS was a legend almost as soon as he was a name. He had come from Harvard, the legend ran, to Greenwich Village, had organized the revolt against pre-war America in "Civilization in the United States," that earliest of the symposiums in which the post-war critics diagnosed the country, and had dramatically left his native land to live in Paris as the cynosure of the expatriates. Newcomers to Montparnasse were asked if they had seen Harold Stearns as soon as they were asked anything, and they were warned of the legend that he would drink any man's liquor or borrow any man's money. Home again, they widened his fame. Even those who had not seen him felt obliged to say they had, and even to add that they had become his creditors. His actual creditors compared notes. Now and then somebody boasted that he had not been one of the susceptible multitude. By the end of the decade the legend was so rooted that it still outlives the facts, and Americans in Paris cafes look around for Harold Stearns, unaware that for more than three years he has been living and working in New York.

In a sense, such legends cannot be ended. They move on a plane of hearsay above history. One hearer passes them on to another till they get far beyond the reach of correction. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of Americans will go on thinking of Harold Stearns as the legend made him out, and will not read or hear of his autobiography, "The Street I Know." The legend will not yield to the life but will only wither away as men lose interest in the expatriate decade. It will die, not be killed, when the last man who remembers it forgets to tell it.

It is a pity, for Mr. Stearns's autobiography is at many points a touching and revealing book. Touching, in its account of his random youth and of how his young wife died in childbirth and what share her death had in sending him to Europe. Touching, too, in its record of his miserable last months in Paris, of his broken return to America, and of his dogged efforts to build a new life on dingy ruins. I have never met Harold Stearns and should not know him if I saw him. All I know is the legend and the autobiography. But I have read his book with interest in a real human being as well as curiosity about an age that has already come to seem unreal.

"The Street I Know" would not be so revealing if it did not make it clear that Mr. Stearns was the epitome of the 20's. Neither very original nor very distinguished, he was acutely assimilative. All the ideas of the time met in his mind, and all the fashions of behavior affected his conduct. Most of his contemporaries who are known appear to have had some individual brake or bias which kept them from falling wholly into step with the decade. The decade's pace was Mr. Stearns's. One of the first of the bohemians, he was one of the first of the post-war critics and one of the first of the expatriates. If anything marked him off from the general

mode it was that he exemplified it more purely than others and clung to it longer. That does not make him any less an epitome. To understand the 20's you must study Harold Stearns.

There is irony in his book no less than history, for he turns out to have been a more or less classical American. The son of a widow, he had the familiar boyhood hardships, earned money while he was at college, went to the city to seek his fortune with no capital but his degree and his wits, got a job, made a name for himself quicker than most young men do, was married and had a child, suffered grief and adversity, admitted defeat, and started out again. He was forty-one when Professor Pitkin discovered when life begins. Mr. Stearns in his final chapter asks: Can life begin at forty-four? The answer is that it can and frequently does, especially in America. His can unless the whole form and design of America have changed. As to that, he will have to wait and find out like anybody else.

CARL VAN DOREN

A Reconstruction Statesman

Lucius Q. Lamar: Secession and Reunion. By Wirt Armstrong Cate. The University of North Carolina Press. \$5.

THOUGH not quite the paragon of all virtue Mr. Cate makes him out to be, Lucius Q. C. Lamar was certainly a high-minded gentleman, a man of great ability and personal integrity, a statesman of very nearly first rank, a political leader sincerely devoted to the public welfare as he saw it. And yet he exercised an influence on public affairs more sinister and more truly pernicious than any corruptionist or time-server of his day. For he was, in the national arena, the outstanding Southern representative of the forces directly responsible for the ultimate frustration of the great emancipatory promise of the Civil War.

Sprung from the ruling caste of the Old South, Lamar was destined by birth to share in its social and political prerogatives. His early career, in his native Georgia as well as in Mississippi, was hardly notable; he was the typical young Southern "fire-eater," eager to spread slavery to "every inch of American soil," ever looking forward to secession and the establishment of an independent Southern republic founded on the South's "peculiar institution." When the war came, Lamar immediately took to the field, but he soon turned to diplomacy and was sent as special commissioner to Russia—serving in both capacities without any particular distinction. In fact, it was not until the end of the war, when he was already in his fortieth year, that Lamar's public career really began. Once definitely started, he quickly became one of the most influential political figures in the United States.

The victory of the North in the Civil War brought the country face to face with the great problem of reconstruction. Would the military defeat of the slave-owning oligarchy lead, with the force of historical consistency, to the destruction of its economic and political power and to the effective emancipation of the underlying population, black and white alike? Or would it be followed by a compromise with the old ruling classes of the South, the preservation of their privileges, and the condemnation of the newly liberated Negro race to a serf-like caste existence? The radicals, whom Lamar himself, with extraordinary insight, compared to the Jacobins in the French Revolution, strove with all their might to drive the Civil War to its logical conclusion. For a while, as long as their objectives fell in with the interests of Northern industrial capitalism dominating the Republican Party, they seemed to have everything their own way. But for reasons inherent in the historical situation, radicalism very soon began to lose favor with the

Northern bourgeoisie, giving way slowly to the conservative policy of conciliation and compromise championed by Lamar.

The conservatism which Lamar upheld for two decades—it is clear even from Mr. Cate's narrative—was the policy through which the former slave-owners hoped to salvage what they could of their old privileges under the new conditions. Repeatedly did Lamar proclaim his whole-hearted acceptance of the "results of the war"—sincerely, no doubt, although, curiously enough, he found it possible to reconcile this attitude with open contempt for the "policy which emancipated the servile class of the South" and with bitter opposition to equal rights for the Negroes. The ugly reality behind all these fine phrases of patriotism and reconciliation became plain enough when, with the shameful connivance of their Northern friends, the Lamars and the Hamptons succeeded in "redeeming" their states, that is, in overthrowing the Reconstruction regimes, the most genuinely democratic and progressive the South has ever had, and in replacing them by force and fraud with governments of the "conservative and property-owning citizenry" based on the virtual reenslavement of the Negro people.

Once this mission was fulfilled, Lamar again dropped to the background of events. With his elevation from the Senate to the Cabinet and then to the Supreme Court, his career loses all significance; he becomes the ordinary conservative statesman, restricted in social vision and hopelessly wedded to all the shams and prejudices of the new industrial civilization.

Mr. Cate's work is not a biography at all, either in spirit or in execution; it is a piece of special pleading in behalf of the causes for which Lamar stood. Its gross bias is unpleasantly obvious on every page, not only in the selection, arrangement, and presentation of material but in its very temper: every reference to the Negro is a sneer; every speech of a political opponent is "scurrilous," "savage," and "incendiary," while Southern Democrats are invariably "dispassionate." Nor is there the slightest attempt to probe beneath the surface, to uncover the real forces at work either in the life of the man or in the course of events. To grasp the true significance of the life of Lucius Q. C. Lamar, a social point of view and a historical method quite different from the approach of Mr. Cate are necessary.

WILL HERBERG

Drama Sure Fire

WHEN Sidney Kingsley's "Men in White" drew the Pulitzer Prize two years ago, it was generally admitted that his success was primarily a theatrical one: the play was effective, not because it was either very original or very profound, but because the author gave an able acting company a script which was eminentlyactable even at moments when it was not anything else. In his new play "Dead End" (Belasco Theater) he now demonstrates the fact that this first success was no mere accident. With the sure instinct of the first-rate theatrical craftsman he again selects a theme which is genuinely significant but which has been treated often enough to be easily manageable in terms of various concrete situations whose effectiveness has already been demonstrated. Thus he himself is relieved of the necessity of working out either characters or predicaments which will serve as satisfactory symbols, and the audience is, at the same time, relieved of the necessity of discovering what their significance is. The author can devote himself to the expert manipulation of easily comprehensible material, and the spectator can surrender himself to a series of swift, colorful, clearly outlined incidents.

On the former occasion Mr. Kingsley devoted himself to

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the problem of the young doctor who discovers that his profession demands a surrender of the right to much of what the ordinary man regards as an indispensable part of normal human life. In the new play he is concerned with a problem at least as real—with the corrupting influence of poverty, particularly as it affects those children of the slums, whose education in the streets really prepares them adequately for no career except the career of the gangster. It is hard to see how this problem could be made to serve as the basis for a more rapidly moving or more exciting melodrama than the one which Mr. Kingsley has written, with its striking setting along what may well be the Sutton Place waterfront, where the apartments of the rich shoulder the tenements of the poor, and with its effective conjunction of the story of a youthful gang with the story of a graduate now become Public Enemy No. 1. For perfectly understandable and not too reprehensible reasons it will probably outlast any other dramatic production made so far this season, despite the fact that no judicious person would be likely to claim that it is in any sense a great play. Doubtless the most grimly earnest of its spectators will argue that the moderately happy ending which promises at least a temporary, if somewhat fortuitous, rescue for the youthful gang leader offers a solution which is not a general one and therefore weakens the social effectiveness of the play. But that is not the real reason why "Dead End" remains essentially theatrical. The real reason is that, without being false, it lacks either that originality of incident or that freshness of feeling at least one or the other of which is necessary to make a play great. Its quality varies from the sleazy cheapness of its conventional love story to what seems to me the one touch of near-greatness in the scene between the mature gangster and his mother. But during four-fifths of the time it is running on the level of first-rate melodrama, which grips without actually ceasing at any time to be obviously a play and without turning up any situation or any thought not essentially familiar. "Dead End" is, to put it brutally, very high-grade hokum.

There is an effective performance by Joseph Downing as the gangster, an imaginative if brief one by Marjory Main as his mother, and satisfactory work by the rest of the adult cast. Nevertheless, the play owes much more of its effectiveness to the extraordinarily convincing realism of the troupe of boys and to the solid and accurate set by Norman Bel Geddes. The latter is unusually elaborate, with a towering tenement flanked by the back entrance of a luxurious apartment at the dead end of a street. In addition Mr. Bel Geddes has turned the front of the apron into a very realistic dock front; the boys dive off it into the orchestra pit with a convincing splash; and the audience is, accordingly, supposed to be sitting somewhere in the East River. Once one has got over the fear of seeing a tugboat come down the aisle or of finding a melon rind in one's lap it is all very striking. Doubtless the piles at the dock head are plaster but even from the third row they look like water-logged wood, and the tenements are so solid that they appear at least as livable as one of the blocks they represent. To look at it all is as good as going down to Sutton Place itself but it isn't any better, and with the memory of the first act of "Winterset" in mind one realizes that a stage picture can be something more than the thing it is copied from. Gazing at the so completely "practical" houses which Mr. Bel Geddes has constructed I could not help feeling that it would be a pity when the run is over to send them to Cains's warehouse. Pease and Elliman should be notified.

Sometime during the course of "On Stage" (Mansfield Theater) the author makes his hero bring up the name of Pirandello with the obvious intention of warning reviewers that he thought of the comparison first. The intention seems to have been to take Pirandello's favorite device of introducing into the

spectator's mind a doubt as to where the line between reality and fancy lies, and to use this device for purposes rather less pretentious than those of the bemused Italian. The idea is a good one, and the play, which concerns a dramatist who dreams a play about his characters different from the one he wrote and who wakes to find that one of the characters is really a woman with whom he has been unconsciously in love, is rather entertaining. It would be more so, I think, if the author had gone even a bit farther in the direction of treating the Pirandello theme lightly. The members of the cast, especially Osgood Perkins, Selena Royle, and Donald MacDonald, are pleasant.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

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